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A
V I E W
O F
SOCIETY AND MANNERS
I N
I T A L Y.
V O L. I.



Joshua A. Minnith 1792

V I E W
O F
SOCIETY AND MANNERS
I N
I T A L Y:
W I T H
A N E C D O T E S
RELATING TO SOME
EMINENT CHARACTERS.
BY JOHN MOORE, M.D.
IN THREE VOLUMES.
V O L. I.

Strenua nos exercet inertia: navibus atque
Quadrigris petimus bene vivere. Quod petis, hic est.
HOR.

THE THIRD EDITION.

D U B L I N:

PRINTED FOR H. CHAMBERLAINE, W. GILBERT,
R. MONCRIEFFE, W. WILSON, G. BURNET,
AND R. MARCHBANK.

M,DCC,LXXXVI.



ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following observations on Italy, and on Italian manners, occurred in the course of the same Tour in which those contained in a book lately published, entitled, *A View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Germany*, were made. All who have read that book will perceive, at first sight, that the present work is a continuation of the former; but to those who have not, it was thought necessary to account for the abrupt manner in which the following Letters begin.

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December 14, 1780.

1844

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C O N T E N T S
O F T H E
F I R S T V O L U M E.

L E T T E R I. p. 1.

Journey from Vienna to Venice.

L E T T E R II. p. 14.

The arsenal.—The Bucentaur.—Doge's marriage.

L E T T E R III. p. 19.

*The island of Murano.—Glass manufactory.
—Mr. Montague.*

L E T T E R IV. p. 27.

*Situation of Venice. — Lagune. — Canals. —
Bridges.*

LETTER V. p. 32.

*Piazza di St. Marco.—Patriarchal church.
—Ducal palace.—Broglia.*

LETTER VI. p. 39.

*Reflections excited by the various objects around St.
Mark's square.—On painting.—A connoisseur.*

LETTER VII. p. 48.

Origin of Venice.

LETTER VIII. p. 54.

*Various changes in the form of government.—Ty-
rannical conduct of a Doge.—Savage behaviour
of the people.—Commerce of Venice.*

LETTER IX. p. 62.

*New regulations.—Foundation of the aristocracy.
—Origin of the ceremony of espousing the Sea.
—New forms of magistracy.*

LETTER X. p. 72.

Henry Dandolo.

CONTENTS.

ix

LETTER XI. p. 79.

New courts.—New magistrates.—Reformation of the Venetian code.—The form of electing the Doge.

LETTER XII. p. 89.

Aristocracy established.—Conspiracies.—Insurrections.—Ecclesiastical Inquisition.—The College, or Seignior.

LETTER XIII. p. 99.

Conspiracy against the State, by a Doge.—Singular instance of weakness and vanity in a noble Venetian.—New magistrates to prevent luxury.—Courtisans.

LETTER XIV. p. 108.

Rigour of Venetian laws exemplified in the cases of Antonio Venier, Carlo Zeno, and young Foscari.

LETTER XV. p. 117.

The Council of Ten, and the State Inquisitors.—Reflections on these institutions.

CONTENTS.

LETTER XVI. p. 128.

*League of Cambray.—War with the Turks.—
Antonio Bragadino.—Battle of Lapanto.—
Disputes with the Pope.*

LETTER XVII. p. 138.

*Marquis of Bedamar's conspiracy.—False accusa-
tions.—The siege of Candia.—The impatience
of a Turkish Emperor.—Conclusion of the
review of the Venetian Government.*

LETTER XVIII. p. 148.

*Venetian manners.—Opera.—Affectation.—A
Duo.—Dancers.*

LETTER XIX. p. 157.

*No military establishment at Venice.—What sup-
plies its place.*

LETTER XX. p. 161.

*Reflections on the nature of Venetian Government.
—Gondoleers.—Citizens.—The Venetian sub-
jects on the Terra Firma.*

CONTENTS.

xi

LETTER XXI. p. 167.

Gallantry.—Cassinos.

LETTER XXII. p. 174.

*Character of Venetians.—Customs and usages.
—Influence of fashion in matters of taste.—Pre-
judice.—The excellence of Italian comic actors.*

LETTER XXIII. p. 183.

*Departure from Venice.—Padua.—St. Anthony,
his tomb and miracles.*

LETTER XXIV. p. 189.

*Church of St. Justina.—The bodies of St. Mat-
thew and St. Luke.—The university.—Beggars.*

LETTER XXV. p. 193.

*The antiquity of Padua.—The Brenta.—The Po.
—The Thames.*

LETTER XXVI. p. 201.

*Ferrara.—The family of Este.—Ariosto, the Em-
peror, and his brothers, lodge at an inn, which
oversets the understanding of the landlord.
—An inscription.*

LETTER XXVII. p. 207.

Bologna.—Its government, commerce, palaces.

LETTER XXVIII. p. 214.

The academy of arts and sciences.—Church of St. Petronius.—Dominican convent.—Palaces.—Raphael.—Guido.

LETTER XXIX. p. 223.

Journey from Bologna to Ancona.—The Rubicon.—Julius Cæsar.—Pesaro.—Fano.—Claudius Nero.—Asdrubal.—Senegalia.

LETTER XXX. p. 232.

Ancona.—The influence of commerce on the characters of mankind.—The Mole.—The triumphal arch of the Emperor Trajan.

LETTER XXXI. p. 239.

Loretto.—History of the Casa Santa.

LETTER XXXII. p. 244.

Description of the sacred chapel.—The treasury.

Minna 1794

A
V I E W
O F
SOCIETY AND MANNERS
I N
I T A L Y.

L E T T E R I.

DEAR SIR,

Venice.

HAVING left Vienna, we proceeded through the Duchies of Stiria, Carinthia, and Carniola, to Venice. Notwithstanding the mountainous nature of those countries, the roads are remarkably good. They were formed originally at a vast expence of labour to the inhabitants, but in such a durable manner, that it requires no great trouble to keep them in repair, to which all necessary attention seems to be paid. Some of the mountains are covered with wood, but more generally they are quite bare. Among them are many fields and vallies, fit for pasturage and the

VOL. I.

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cultivation of grain ; a few of these vallies are remarkably fertile, particularly in the Duchy of Carniola. The bowels of the earth abound in lead, copper, and iron. Stirian steel is reckoned excellent; and the little town of Idra, in Carniola, is famous for the quicksilver mines in its neighbourhood.

It has been a matter of controversy among the learned (for the learned dispute about many things which the ignorant think of little importance), by what road the original inhabitants came, who first peopled Italy? And it has been decided by some, that they must have entered by this very country of Carniola. These gentlemen lay it down as an axiom, that the first inhabitants of every country in the world, that is not an island, must have come by land, and not by sea, on account of the ignorance of the early inhabitants of the earth in the art of navigation; but Italy being a peninsula, the only way to enter it by land, is at some part of the isthmus by which it is joined to the rest of Europe. The Alps form great part of that isthmus, and in the early ages, would exclude strangers as effectually as the sea. The easiest, shortest, and only possible way of avoiding seas and mountains, in entering Italy, is by the Duchy of Carniola and Friuli. *Ergo*, they came that way. Q. E. D.

In contradiction to the preceding demonstration, others assert, that the first inhabitants came

in ships from Greece; and others have had the boldness to affirm, that Italy had as good a right as any other country to have inhabitants of its own original production, without being obliged to any vagrants whatever.

I thought it right to give you the opinion of the learned on this country, because it is not in my power to describe it from my own observation; for we passed through those Duchies with a rapidity which baffles all *description*.

The inns are as bad as the roads are good; for which reason we chose to sleep on the latter rather than on the former, and actually travelled five days and nights, without stopping any longer than was necessary to change horses.

This method of travelling, however agreeable and improving it may be in other respects, is by no means calculated to give one the most perfect and lasting idea of the face of a country; or of the manners and characters of the inhabitants; and therefore I hope you will not insist upon an exact account of either.

Among other curiosities which our uninterrupted and expeditious movement prevented us from observing with due attention, was the town of Gratz, the capital of Stiria, through which we unfortunately passed in the middle of the night.

I did not regret this on account of the regularity of the streets, the venerable aspect of the churches, the sublime site of the castle, and other things which we had heard extolled; but solely because we had not an opportunity of visiting the shrine of St. Allan, a native of England, who formerly was a Dominican Monk of a convent in this town, and in high favour with the Virgin Mary, of which she gave him some proofs as strong as they were extraordinary. Amongst other marks of her regard, she used to comfort him with milk from her breasts. This, to be sure, is a mark of affection seldom bestowed upon favourites above a year old, and will, I dare say, surprise you a good deal. There is no great danger, however, that an example of this kind should spread among virgins. Of the fact in the present instance there can be no doubt; for it is recorded in an inscription underneath a portrait of the Saint, which is carefully preserved in the Dominican convent of this city. We continued our journey, in the full resolution of reaching Venice before we indulged in any other bed than the post-chaise; but were obliged to stop short on a sudden for want of horses, at a small town called Wipach, bordering on the county of Goritia, in Carniola.

Before setting out from Vienna, we had been informed, that the Archduke and his Princess were about to return to Milan; for which reason we thought it adviseable to remain at

Vienna eight days after their departure, to avoid the inconvenience which might arise from a deficiency of post-horses on such an unfrequented road.

Having taken our measures with so much foresight, we little expected, when we actually did set out, to meet with any delay in our progress.

The Archduke and his Duchess, however, had thought proper to go out of the direct road as far as Trieste, to view the late improvements of that town, whose commerce is greatly encouraged and protected by the Emperor; and remaining there a few days, all the post-horses which had been assembled to carry them to Trieste, were kept in the post-houses for their use; consequently we found none at Wipach. It began to grow dark when we arrived; the Post-master was smoking his pipe at the door. As soon as the chaise stopped, we called to him to get the horses without loss of time; for, I added, with a tone of importance, that we could not possibly stay a moment. To this he replied coolly, that since we were in so very great a hurry, he should not attempt to detain us, but that he had no horses to carry us on. I asked, how soon they could be got. He answered, when they returned from attending the Archduke; but whether that would be the next day, the following, or a day or two after, he could not tell.

It appeared a great hardship to be stopped short, so unexpectedly, at a little paltry inn, and we agreed that nothing could have happened more unfortunately. After a few hasty ejaculations, which regarded the posting establishment, and the Lords of Police of this country, we resolved to make a virtue of necessity, and bear our misfortunes with firmness and equanimity.

As we stepped out of the chaise, I ordered the Post-master, therefore, to get ready beds, a good supper, and some of his best wine. Instead of receiving these injunctions with marks of satisfaction, as I expected, he answered without emotion, that he had no wine but for his own drinking; that he never gave suppers to any but his own family; and that he had no bed, except that which he himself, his wife, and his child occupied, which could not easily hold any more than them three at a time.

I had not hitherto perceived that this man's house was not an inn: as soon as I was undeceived, I begged he would inform us where the inn was. He pointed with his pipe to a small house on the opposite side of the street.

There we were told, that all the victuals in the house were already devoured—three or four guests were in every spare room—the family going to bed—and they could not possibly receive any more company. We had nearly the same

account at another little inn, and an absolute refusal at every house where we sued for admittance.

The town of Wipach is so near Goritia, that no travellers, except those of the meanest kind, ever think of stopping at the former; and therefore the inhabitants have no idea of making preparations for other guests.

In this dilemma I returned to our Post-master, who was still smoking his pipe before the door. I informed him of our bad success, and, in a more soothing tone of voice than that in which I had formerly addressed him, begged to know how we were to dispose of ourselves that night. He replied, with admirable composure, *that* was more than he could tell; but as the horses were expected in a few days, if I should send him word where we were to be found, he would take care to let us know the moment they should be ready: in the mean time, as it began to rain, and the evening was exceedingly cold, he wished us a very good night. So saying, he went into the house, shutting and bolting the door very carefully after him.

No philosopher, ancient or modern, ever supported the distresses of others with more equanimity than this man.

We were now fully convinced, that to be under the necessity of remaining all night at an inn, when they incline to proceed on their journey, is not the most unfortunate thing that can befall travellers, and would have now been happy in that situation which we had considered with horror an hour or two before.

In this forlorn condition I turned to an Italian servant of the Duke of H——'s, a shrewd fellow, who seldom wanted a resource in times of difficulty. He seemed, however, a little nonplussed on the present emergency; he stood shrugging his shoulders, with his eyes fixed on the ground. At length, starting, as if he had that instant awaked, he muttered, "*Cent ore di maniconia non pangano un quattrino di debito*;" "A hundred hours of vexation will not pay one farthing of debt;" and then walked away with an air not totally devoid of hope.

I attended him, without knowing upon what his expectations were founded. We came to a convent of Monks, and got admittance; the Italian called for the Superior, and told him, in a few words, our condition. The venerable old man heard him with an air of benevolence; he expressed sorrow at the treatment we had received, and, desiring me to accompany him, said he would endeavour to find us lodgings. He conducted us to a poor looking house, occupied by a widow and her children. As soon

as the good Monk had mentioned our case, she said we should be most welcome to such entertainment as she could afford. We had an excellent supper of four kroust, and salad. I shall never forget it. I found her wine excellent, and her beds delightful; the good Monk seemed to enjoy the satisfaction we expressed, and positively refused to accept of any other recompence for his trouble.

Had we found the most elegant inn, and the most luxurious supper at our arrival, we might possibly have spent the evening in repining at being disappointed in post-horses; but the dread of so small a misfortune as passing the night supperless in the streets, reconciled us at once to the widow's hovel, and made us happy with her homely fare; so necessary is a certain portion of hardships or difficulties for giving a zest to enjoyment. Without them, the comforts of life are apt to become insipid; and we see that the people who independent of any effort of their own, have every enjoyment at their command, are, perhaps, of all mankind, those who have the least enjoyment.

The widow, as we understood in the morning, had sat up all night with her family; that we might be accommodated with beds. She had no reason to repent her hospitality. The poor woman's gratitude made her talk loudly of

the D— of H——'s generosity; which coming to the ears of the Post-master, induced him to make an effort to get the chaises dragged on to Goritia, without waiting the return of the post-horses.

This was performed by three cart-horses and two oxen, which were relieved in the most mountainous part of the road by buffalos. There is a breed of these animals in this country; they are strong, hardy, and docile, and found preferable to either horses or oxen, for ploughing in a rough and hilly country.

When we arrived at Goritia, we found the inhabitants in their holiday dresses, at the windows, and in the streets, waiting with impatience for a sight of the Grand Duke and Duchefs. Having applied at the post-house for horses, we were informed that none could be granted, all being retained for the accommodation of his Highness. I could not help remarking to the D— of H——, that *Dukes* seemed to be in a very different predicament from *prophets in their own countries*.

Things turned out better than we had reason to expect. Their Highnesses arrived in the evening; and as they did not propose to leave Goritia till next morning, the Archduke had the politeness to give orders that the D— of

H—— should have what horses he wanted from the post-houses.

We set out immediately, and arrived at the next stage between one and two in the morning. In that part of the world, raising the people at midnight, and harnessing the horses for two carriages, takes up, at least, as much time as driving two stages in some parts of England. Just as we were going out of the post-house court, the Archduke's butler and cook arrived; they were going forward, as usual, to prepare supper, &c. at the inn where their Highnesses intended to lie. They knew that the horses were all retained for their master, but had not heard of the particular order in favour of the D— of H——. Seeing ten horses going to set out, they exclaimed against the Post-master, and threatened him with the vengeance of the whole house of Austria through all its branches, if he should permit a single horse to leave the post-house till the Archduke and his suite had passed.

The man, terrified with these threats, ordered the postilions to dismount, and put up the horses. This mandate was by no means agreeable to the D— of H——; and the Post-master's fear of the indignation of the Imperial family, was that instant lost in a danger which was presented to his face, and more

immediately threatened his person—he ordered the postillions to drive on.

The next post was at a small town in the Venetian State, where we found that orders had come from Venice to the same effect with those received at the different stages we had already past. The D— of H——'s Italian servant thought it would save time to make us pass for part of the company to which these orders related—he ordered horses in the name of the Grand Duke, and was instantly obeyed—but the butler and cook arriving soon after, told a different tale. Couriers were dispatched, one of whom overtook us, and, in the name of the magistrates, ordered the postillions to drive back, for we were a gang of impostures, who had no connection with the Grand Duke. The same arguments, however, which had so good an effect on the German Post-master, prevailed also on the courier to be silent, and the postillions to proceed.

It was midnight before we arrived at Mestre, a small town on the banks of the Lagune, five miles from Venice, where we remained all night. Next morning we hired a boat, and in two hours were landed in the middle of this city.

We have taken very delightful apartments at an inn, on the side of the great canal. They

had been just quitted by his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, who is at present at Padua. Thus at length we arrived in Italy—

Per varios casus, & tot discrimina rerum.

Thro' various hazards, and many cross events.

L E T T E R II.

Venice.

A Few days after our arrival at Venice, we met the Archduke and Duchess, at the house of the Imperial Ambassador. They were highly entertained with the history of their cook and butler, which I gave them at full length.

The company consisted entirely of foreigners, the Venetian nobility never visiting in the houses of foreign ministers.

Among other strangers was the son of the Duke of Berwick. This young gentleman has lately allied himself to the family from which he is descended, by marrying the sister of the Countess of Albany. I suppose you have heard that the Pretender now at Florence, has assumed the title of Count Albany.

Next day the D— of H—— accompanied the Archduke and Duchess to the arsenal. They were attended by a deputation from the senate.

Some Venetian ladies of the first distinction, in compliment to the Archduchess, were of the party.

The arsenal at Venice is a fortification of between two and three miles in compass. On the ramparts are many little watch-towers, where centinels are stationed. Like the arsenal at Toulon, it is at once a dock-yard, and repository for naval and military stores. Here the Venetians build their ships, cast their cannon, make their cables, sails, anchors, &c. The arms are arranged here as in other places of the same kind, in large rooms divided into narrow walks by long walls of muskets, pikes, and halberts. Every thing having been prepared before the Archduke and Duchess arrived, a cannon was cast in their presence. After this the company were conducted on board the Bucentaur, or vessel in which the Doge is carried to espouse the Adriatic. Here they were regaled with wine and sweetmeats, the Venetian nobles doing the honours of the entertainment.

The Bucentaur is kept under cover, and never taken out but for the espousals. It is formed for containing a very numerous company, is finely gilt and ornamented within, and loaded on the outside with emblematical figures in sculpture. This vessel may possibly be admired by landsmen, but will not much charm

a seaman's eye, being a heavy broad-bottomed machine, which draws little water, and consequently may be easily overfet in a gale of wind. Of this, however, there is no great danger, as two precautions are taken to prevent such an accident; one of which seems calculated to quiet the minds of believers, and the other to give confidence to the most incredulous. The first is used by the Patriarch, who, as soon as the vessel is afloat, takes care to pour into the sea some holy water, which is believed to have the virtue of preventing or allaying storms. The second is entrusted to the Admiral, who has the discretionary power of postponing the marriage ceremony, when the bride seems in the smallest degree boisterous. One of the virtues of the holy water, that of allaying storms, is by this means rendered superfluous.

But when the weather is quite favourable, the ceremony is performed every Ascension Day. The solemnity is announced in the morning by the ringing of bells and firing of cannon. About mid-day the Doge, attended by a numerous party of the senate and clergy, goes on board the Bucentaur; the vessel is rowed a little way into the sea, accompanied by the splendid yachts of the foreign Ambassadors, the gondolas of the Venetian nobility, and an incredible number of barks and galleys of every kind. Hymns are sung, and a band of music performs, while the Bucentaur and her attendants slowly move

towards St. Lido, a small island, two miles from Venice. Prayers are then said; after which the Doge drops a ring, of no great value, into the sea, pronouncing these words—*Desponsamus te, Mare, in signum veri perpetuæ dominii*. The sea, like a modest bride, assents by her silence, and the marriage is deemed valid and secure to all intents and purposes.

Certain it is, the time has been, when the Doge had entire possession of, and dominion over, his spouse; but for a considerable time past, her favours have been shared by several other lovers; or, according to that violent metaphor of Otway's,

—now

Their Great Duke shrinks, trembling in his palace,
And sees his wife, the Adriatic, plough'd
Like a lewd whore, by bolder prows than his.

After viewing every thing in the arsenal, the Archduke and Dukes, with all the company, were invited on board some boats which had been prepared for their reception. They were directly rowed to that part of the lake from whence there was the most advantageous view of Venice, a band of music performing all the time; while the sailors, in two or three small boats, were employed in fishing oysters, which they opened and presented to the company.

The amusements of this day had all the advantage of novelty to render them agreeable to strangers, and every additional pleasure which the attentive and polite behaviour of the Venetian nobility could give.

L E T T E R III.

Venice.

AS this is not the time of any of the public solemnities which draw strangers to Venice, it is fortunate that we happen to be here with the Archduke and Duchefs. The great respect which this state is anxious of shewing the imperial family, has brought many of the nobility to Venice, who would otherwise have been at their country seats on the continent, and has also given us opportunities of seeing some things to more advantage than we could otherwise have done.

I had the honour of attending their Highnesses when they went to visit the island of Murano. This is about a mile from Venice, was formerly a very flourishing place, and still boasts some palaces which bear the marks of former magnificence, though now in a state of decay. The island is said to contain 20,000 inhabitants. The great manufactories of looking-glasses are the only inducements which strangers have to visit this place. I saw one very fine plate for a mirror, made in the presence of the Archduke in a few minutes: though not so large as some I

have seen at the Paris manufactory, yet it was much larger than I could have thought it in the power of human lungs to blow. Instead of being cast, as in France and England, the Murano mirrors are all blown in the manner of bottles. It is astonishing to see with what dexterity the workman wields a long hollow cylinder of melted glass, at the end end of an iron tube, which, when he has extended as much as possible, by blowing, and every other means his art suggests, he slits with a sharp instrument, removing the two extremities from each other, and folding back the sides: the cylinder now appears a large sheet of glass, which being once more introduced into the furnace, is brought out a clear finished plate.

This manufactory formerly served all Europe with looking-glasses; the quantity made here is still considerable; for although France and England, and some other countries, make their own mirrors, yet, by the natural progress of luxury, those countries which still get their mirrors and other things from Murano, use a much greater quantity now than formerly; so that on the supposition that the Murano manufacturers have lost three-fourths of their customers, they may still retain half as much trade as they ever had. It is surprising that, instead of blowing, they do not adopt the method of casting, which I should think a much easier process, and by which larger plates may be made. Besides mirrors, an

infinite quantity of glass trinkets (*margaritini* as they are called) of all shapes and colours are made here. Women of the inferior ranks wear them as ornaments, and as rosaries; they also mould this substance into many various whimsical forms, by way of ornamental furniture to houses and churches. In short, there are glass baubles enough made here to bribe into slavery half the inhabitants of the coast of Guinea.

Since the departure of the Archduke and Duchess, the D— of H—— has passed his time mostly in the houses of the foreign Ambassadors, the best resource here, next to the theatres, for strangers.

We were lately at a *conversazione* at the Spanish Ambassador's; it might have passed for a pantomime entertainment. The Ambassador, his lady, and daughters, speak no language but Spanish; and unfortunately this was understood by none of the company but the Duke of Berwick's son. Hearing that Mr. Montague resided at Venice, the D— of H—— has had the curiosity to wait on that extraordinary man. He met his grace at the stair-head, and led us through some apartments, furnished in the Venetian manner, into an inner room in quite a different style. There were no chairs, but he desired us to seat ourselves on a sofa, whilst he placed himself on a cushion on the floor, with his legs crossed in the Turkish fashion. A young

black slave sat by him, and a venerable old man, with a long beard, served us with coffee.

After this collation some aromatic gums were brought, and burnt in a little silver vessel. Mr. Montague held his nose over the steam for some minutes, and snuffed up the perfume with peculiar satisfaction; he afterwards endeavoured to collect the smoke with his hands, spreading and rubbing it carefully along his beard, which hung in hoary ringlets to his girdle. This manner of perfuming the beard seems more cleanly, and rather an improvement upon that used by the Jews in ancient times, as described in the psalms translated by Sternhold and Hopkins.

'Tis like the precious ointment, that
Was pour'd on Aaron's head,
Which from the beard down to the skirts
Of his rich garments spread.

Or, as the Scotch translation has it:

Like precious ointment on the head
That down the beard did flow;
Even Aaron's beard, and to the skirts
Did of his garments go.

Which of these versions is preferable, I leave to critics in Hebrew and English poesy to determine. I hope for the sake of David's

reputation as a poet, that neither have retained all the spirit of the original. We had a great deal of conversation with this venerable looking person, who is, to the last degree, acute, communicative, and entertaining, and in whose discourse and manners are blended the vivacity of a Frenchman with the gravity of a Turk. We found him, however, wonderfully prejudiced in favour of the Turkish characters and manners, which he thinks infinitely preferable to the European, or those of any other nation.

He describes the Turks in general as a people of great sense and integrity, the most hospitable, generous, and the happiest of mankind. He talks of returning, as soon as possible to Egypt, which he paints as a perfect paradise; and thinks that, had it not been otherwise ordered for wise purposes, of which it does not become us to judge, the children of Israel would certainly have chosen to remain where they were, and have endeavoured to drive the Egyptians to the land of Canaan.

Though Mr. Montague hardly ever stirs abroad, he returned the D—'s visit; and as we were not provided with cushions, he sat, while he staid, upon a sofa, with his legs under him, as he had done at his own house. This posture, by long habit, is now become the most agreeable to him, and he insists on its being by far the most natural and convenient; but, indeed, he

seems to cherish the same opinion with regard to all the customs which prevail among the Turks. I could not help mentioning one, which I suspected would be thought both unnatural and inconvenient by at least one half of the human race; that of the men being allowed to engross as many women as they can maintain, and confining them to the most insipid of all lives, within their harems. "No doubt," replied he, "the women are all enemies to polygamy and concubinage; and there is reason to imagine, that this aversion of theirs, joined to the great influence they have in all Christian countries, has prevented Mahometanism from making any progress in Europe. The Turkish men, on the other hand," continued he, "have an aversion to Christianity, equal to that which the Christian women have to the religion of Mahomet: auricular confession is perfectly horrible to their imagination. No Turk, of any delicacy, would ever allow his wife, particularly if he had but one, to hold private conference with a man, on any pretext whatever."

I took notice, that this aversion to auricular confession, could not be a reason for the Turk's dislike to the *Protestant* religion. "That is true," said he, "but you have other tenets in common with the Catholics, which renders your religion as odious as theirs. You forbid polygamy and concubinage, which, in

“ the eyes of the Turks, who obey the dictates
“ of the religion they embrace, is considered as
“ an intolerable hardship. Besides, the idea
“ which your religion gives of heaven, is by no
“ means to their taste. If they believed your ac-
“ count, they would think it the most tiresome
“ and comfortless place in the universe, and not
“ one Turk among a thousand would go to the
“ Christian heaven if he had it in his choice.
“ Lastly, the Christian religion considers wo-
“ men, as creatures upon a level with men, and
“ equally entitled to every enjoyment, both
“ here and hereafter. When the Turks are
“ told this,” added he, “ they are not surprized
“ at being informed also, that women, in gene-
“ ral, are better Christians than men; but they
“ are perfectly astonished that an opinion, which
“ they think so contrary to common sense,
“ should subsist among the rational, that is to
“ say, the male part of Christians. It is im-
“ possible,” added Mr. Montague, “ to drive it
“ out of the head of a Mussulman, that women
“ are creatures of a subordinate species, created
“ merely to comfort and amuse men during
“ their journey through this vain world, but by
“ no means worthy of accompanying believers
“ to paradise, where females, of a nature far
“ superior to women, wait with impatience to
“ receive all pious Mussulmen into their arms.”

It is needless to relate to you any more of our
conversation. A lady, to whom I was giving an

account of it the day on which it happened, could with difficulty allow me to proceed thus far in my narrative; but, interrupting me with impatience, she said, she was surprized I could repeat all the nonsensical, detestable, impious maxims of those odious Mahometans; and she thought Mr. Montague should be sent back to Egypt, with his long beard, and not be allowed to propagate opinions, the bare mention of which, however reasonable they might appear to Turks, ought not to be tolerated in a Christian land.

LETTER IV.

Venice.

THE view of Venice, at some little distance from the town, is mentioned by many travellers in terms of the highest admiration. I had been so often forewarned of the amazement with which I should be struck at first sight of this city, that when I actually did see it, I felt little or no amazement at all. You will behold, said those anticipators, a magnificent town,—or more frequently, to make the deeper impresson, they gave it in detail—You will behold, said they, magnificent palaces, churches, towers and steeples, all standing in the middle of the sea. Well; this, unquestionably, is an uncommon scene; and there is no manner of doubt that a town, surrounded by water, is a very fine sight; but all the travellers that have existed since the days of Cain, will not convince me, that a town, surrounded by land, is not a much finer. Can there be any comparifon, in point of beauty, between the dull monotony of a watery surface, and the delightful variety of gardens, meadows, hills, and woods?

If the situation of Venice renders it less agreeable than another city, to behold at a distance, it must render it, in a much stronger degree, less agreeable to inhabit. For you will please to recollect, that, instead of walking or riding in the fields, and enjoying the fragrance of herbs, and the melody of birds; when you wish to take the air here, you must submit to be paddled about, from morning to night, in a narrow boat, along dirty canals; or, if you don't like this, you have one resource more, which is, that of walking in St. Mark's Place.

These are the disadvantages which Venice labours under, with regard to situation; but it has other peculiarities, which, in the opinion of many, overbalance them, and render it, on the whole, an agreeable town.

Venice is said to be built in the sea; that is, it is built in the midst of shallows, which stretch for some miles from the shore, at the bottom of the Adriatic Gulph. Though those shallows, being now all covered with water, have the appearance of one great lake, yet they are called Lagoon, or lakes, because formerly, as it is imagined, there were several. On sailing on the Laguna, and looking to the bottom, many large hollows are to be seen, which at some former period, have, very possibly, been distinct lakes, though now, being all covered with a common

surface of water, they form one large lake, of unequal depth. The intervals between those hollows, it is supposed, were little islands, and are now shallows, which, at ebb, are all within reach of a pole.

When you approach the city, you come along a liquid road, marked by rows of stakes on each side, which direct vessels, of a certain burthen, to avoid the shallows, and keep in deeper water. These shallows are a better defence to the city than the strongest fortifications. On the approach of an enemy's fleet, the Venetians have only to pull up their stakes, and the enemy can advance no farther. They are equally beyond the insult of a land army, even in the midst of winter; for the flux and reflux of the sea, and the mildness of the climate, prevent such a strength of ice as could admit the approach of an army that way.

The lake in which Venice stands, is a kind of small inner gulph, separated from the large one by some islands, at a few miles distance. These islands, in a great measure, break the force of the Adriatic storms, before they reach the Laguna; yet, in very high winds, the navigation of the lake is dangerous to gondolas, and sometimes the gondoleers do not trust themselves, even on the canals within the city. This is not so great an inconveniency to the inhabitants as

you may imagine ; because most of the houses have one door opening upon a canal, and another communicating with the street ; by means of which, and of the bridges, you can go to almost any part of the town by land, as well as by water.

The number of inhabitants are computed at about 150,000 ; the streets, in general, are narrow ; so are the canals, except the grand canal ; which is very broad, and has a serpentine course through the middle of the city. They tell you, there are several hundred bridges in Venice. What pass under this name, however, are single arches thrown over the canals ; most of them paltry enough.

The Rialto consists also of a single arch, but a very noble one, and of marble. It is built across the grand canal, near the middle, where it is narrowest. This celebrated arch is ninety feet wide on the level of the canal, and twenty-four feet high. Its beauty is impaired by two rows of booths, or shops, which are erected upon it, and divide its upper surface into three narrow streets. The view from the Rialto is equally lively and magnificent ; the objects under your eye are the grand canal, covered with boats and gondolas, and flanked on each side with magnificent palaces, churches and spires ; but this fine prospect is almost the only one in Venice ; for except the Grand Canal, and the Ca-

nal Regio, all the others are narrow and mean ; some of them have no keys ; the water literally washes the walls of the houses. When you sail along those wretched canals, you have no one agreeable object to cheer the sight ; and the smell is overwhelmed with the stench which, at certain seasons, exhales from the water.

LETTER V.

Venice.

AS the only agreeable view of Venice is from the grand canal, so the only place where you can walk with ease and safety, is in the piazza, di St. Marco. This is a kind of irregular quadrangle, formed by a number of buildings, all singular in their kind, and very different from each other.

The Ducal palace—the church of St. Mark—that of St. Geminiano—a noble range of buildings, called Procuratie, the new and the old in which are the Museum, the public library, and nine large apartments belonging to the Procurators of St. Mark; all these buildings are of marble.

There is an opening from St. Mark's Place to the sea, on which stand two lofty pillars of granite. Criminals condemned to suffer death publicly, are executed between these pillars; on the top of one of them is a lion, with wings; and on the other, a faint—without wings;—there is, however, a large crocodile at his feet,

which, I presume, belongs to him. At one corner of St. Mark's church, contiguous to the palace, are two statues of Adam and Eve; they have neither wings nor crocodile, nor any kind of attendant, not even their old acquaintance the serpent.

At the corner of the new Procuratie, a little distant from the church, stands the steeple of St. Mark. This is a quadrangular tower, about three hundred feet in height. I am told it is not uncommon in Italy for the church and steeple to be in this state of disunion; this shocked a clergyman, of my acquaintance, very much; he mentioned to me, many years ago, amongst the errors and absurdities of the church of Rome. The gentleman was clearly of opinion, that church and steeple ought to be inseparable as man and wife, and that every church ought to consider its steeple as mortar of its mortar, and stone of its stone. An old captain of a ship, who was present, declared himself of the same way of thinking, and swore that a church, divorced from its steeple, appeared to him as ridiculous as a ship without a mast.

A few paces from the church are three tall poles, on which ensigns and flags are hung on days of public rejoicing. These standards are in memory of the three kingdoms, Cyprus, Candia, and Negropont, which once belonged to this republic; the three crowns are still kept in the Ducal palace. Since the kingdoms are

gone, I should think the crowns and the poles hardly worth preserving; they are, however, of the same value to Venice, that the title of King of France is to his Britannic Majesty. At the bottom of the Tower of St. Mark, is a small neat building of marble, called the Loggia, where some of the Procurators of St. Mark constantly attend to do business. Some people are of opinion that, particularly when the grand council, or the senate, are assembled, these Procurators are placed there, as state centinels, to give warning in case of any appearance of discontent or commotion among the populace, which must necessarily shew itself at this place, as there is no other in Venice where a mob could assemble.

The Patriarchal church of St. Mark, though one of the richest and most expensive in the world, does not strike the eye very much at first; the architecture is of a mixed kind, mostly Gothic, yet many of the pillars are of Grecian orders; the outside is incrusted with marble; the inside, ceiling, and floor, are all of the finest marble; the numerous pillars which support the roof are of the same substance; the whole is crowned by five domes;—but all this labour and expence have been directed by a very moderate share of taste.

The front which looks to the palace, has five brass grates, with historical bas-relieves; over

the principal gate are placed the four famous bronze horses, said to be the workmanship of Lycyppus; they were given to the emperor Nero, by Tiridates, king of Armenia; the fiery spirit of their countenances, and their animated attitudes, are perfectly agreeable with their original destination, of being harnessed to the chariot of the Sun—Nero placed them on the triumphal arch consecrated to him, and they are to be seen on the reverse of some of his medals; they were removed from Rome to Constantinople, placed in the Hypodrome by Constantine, and remained there till the taking of Constantinople by the French and Venetians in the beginning of the 13th century, when they were carried to Venice, and placed upon the gate of St. Mark's church,

The treasury of St. Mark is very rich in jewels and relics; and it was necessary to apply to one of the Procurators of St. Mark for leave to see it. I shall only mention a few of the most valuable effects kept here. Eight pillars from Solomon's temple at Jerusalem; a piece of the Virgin Mary's veil, some of her hair, and a small portion of her milk; the knife used by our Saviour, at his last supper; one of the nails of the cross, and a few drops of his blood. After these it would be impertinent to enumerate the bones, and other relics, of saints and martyrs, of which there is a plentiful show in this church, and still less need I take up your time

with an inventory of the temporal jewels kept here; it would be unpardonable, however, to omit mentioning the picture of the Virgin, by St. Luke. From this, compared with his other works, it is plain, that St. Luke was a much better evangelist than painter: some professions seem to be almost incompatible with each other. I have known many very good painters who would have made bad faints, and here is an instance of an excellent faint who was but an indifferent painter.

The old Procuratie is built of a kind of black marble; the new is of the pietra dura of Istria.

The church of St. Geminiano is an elegant piece of architecture, by Sanfovino.

The Ducal palace is an immense building, entirely of marble. Besides the apartments of the Doge, there are also halls and chambers for the senate, and all the different councils and tribunals. The principal entrance is by a spacious stair, called the Giants stair, on account of two Colossal statues of Mars and Neptune, placed at the top; they are of white marble, the work of Sanfovino, and intended to represent the naval and military power of this state. Their gigantic size might be proper enough formerly, but they would be juster emblems of the present force of this republic if their stature were more moderate.

Under the porticoes, to which you ascend by this stair, you may perceive the gaping mouths of lions, to receive anonymous letters, informations of treasonable practices, and accusations of magistrates for abuses in office.

From the palace there is a covered bridge of communication to a state prison, on the other side of the canal. Prisoners pass to and from the courts over this bridge, which is named Ponte Dei Sospiri.

The apartments and halls of the Ducal palace are ornamented by the pencils of Titian, Paul Veronese, Tintoret, Palma, the Bassans, and other painters. The rape of Europa, and the storming of Zara, both by Paul Veronese, are amongst the highest esteemed pieces of that master. The foot of Europa is honoured with the particular admiration of the connoisseurs; the bull seems to be of their way of thinking, for he licks it as he bears her along above the waves. Some people admire even this thought of the painter; I cannot say I am of the number: I think it is the only thing in the picture which is not admirable; it is making Jupiter enter a little too much into the character which he had assumed. There are a few pictures in this palace by Titian, but a great many by the other masters. The subjects are mostly taken from the history of Venice.

Within the palace there is a little arsenal, which communicates with the hall of the great council. Here a great number of muskets are kept, ready charged, with which the nobles may arm themselves on any sudden insurrection, or other emergency.

The lower gallery, or the piazza under the palace, is called the Broglio. In this the noble Venetians walk and converse: It is only here, and at council, where they have opportunities of meeting together; for they seldom visit openly, or in a family way, at each other's houses, and secret meetings would give umbrage to the state inquisitors; they chuse, therefore, to transact their business on this public walk. People of inferior rank seldom remain on the Broglio for any length of time when the nobility are there.

LETTER VI.

Venice.

I Was led, in my last, into a very particular (and I wish you may not have also found it a very tedious) description of St. Mark's Place. There is no help for what is past, but, for your comfort, you have nothing of the same kind to fear while we remain here; for there is not another square, or *place*, as the French with more propriety call them, in all Venice. To compensate, however, for there being but one, there is a greater variety of objects to be seen at this one, than in any half dozen of the squares, or places, of London or Paris.

After our eyes had been dazzled with looking at pictures, and our legs cramped with sitting in a gondola, it was no small relief, and amusement, to saunter in the Place of St. Mark.

The number and diversity of objects which *there* present themselves to the eye, naturally create a very rapid succession of ideas. The

sight of the churches awakens religious sentiments, and, by an easy transition, the mind is led to contemplate the influence of superstition. In the midst of this reverie, Nero's four horses appear, and carry the fancy to Rome and Constantinople. While you are forcing your way, sword in hand, with the heroic Henry Dandolo, into the capital of Asia, Adam and Eve stop your progress, and lead you to the garden of Eden. You have not long enjoyed a state of innocence and happiness in that delightful paradise, till Eve

— her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she plucks, she eats.

After that unfortunate repast, no more comfort being to be found there, you are glad to mount St. Mark's winged lion, and fly back to the Ducal palace, where you will naturally reflect on the rise and progress of the Venetian state, and the various springs of their government. While you admire the strength of a constitution which has stood firm for so many ages, you are appalled at the sight of the lion's mouth gaping for accusations; and turning with horror from a place where innocence seems exposed to the attacks of hidden malice, you are regaled with the prospect of the sea, which opens your return to a country of *real* freedom, where justice rejects the libel of the hidden accuser, and dares to try, condemn,

and execute *openly*, the highest, as well as the lowest, delinquent.

I assure you I have, more than once, made all this tour, standing in the middle of St. Mark's square ; whereas, in the French places, you have nothing before your eyes but monuments of the monarch's vanity, and the people's adulation ; and in the greater part of the London squares, and streets, what idea can present itself to the imagination, beyond that of the snug neatness and conveniency of substantial brick houses ?

I have been speaking hitherto of a morning saunter ; for in the evening there generally is, on St. Mark's Place, such a mixed multitude of Jews, Turks, and Christians ; lawyers, knaves, and pick-pockets ; mountebanks, old women, and physicians ; women of quality, with masks ; strumpets barefaced ; and, in short, such a jumble of senators, citizens, gondoleers, and people of every character and condition, that your ideas are broken, bruised, and dislocated in the crowd, in such a manner, that you can think, or reflect, on nothing ; yet this being a state of mind which many people are fond of, the place never fails to be well attended, and, in fine weather, numbers pass a great part of the night there. When the piazza is illuminated, and the shops, in the adjacent streets, are lighted up, the whole has a brilliant

effect; and as it is the custom for the ladies, as well as the gentlemen, to frequent the *caffinos* and coffee-houses around, the Place of St. Mark answers all the purposes of either Vauxhall or Ranelagh.

It is not in St. Mark's Place that you are to look for the finest monuments of the art of Titian, or the genius of Palladio; for those you must visit the churches and palaces: but if you are inclined to make that tour, you must find another Cicerone, for I shall certainly not undertake the office. I do not pretend to be a competent judge of painting or architecture; I have no new remarks to make on those subjects, and I wish to avoid a hackneyed repetition of what has been said by others.

Some people seem affected by paintings to a degree which I never could feel, and can scarcely conceive. I admire the works of Guido and Raphael, but there are amateurs who fall downright in love with every man, woman, or angel, produced by those painters.

When the subject is pathetic, I am often struck with the genius and execution of the artist, and touched with the scene represented, but without feeling those violent emotions of grief which some others display. I have seen a man so affected with the grief of Venus, for the death of Adonis, that he has wiped his

eyes as if he had been shedding tears; and have heard another express as much horror at the martyrdom of a saint, as he could have done had he been present at the real execution. Horace's observation is perfectly just, as he applies it.

Segnius irritant animos demissa per aurem,
Quam quæ sunt oculis subjecta fidelibus—

————— What we hear,
With slower passion to the heart proceeds,
Than when an audience views the very deeds.

FRANCIS.

He is treating of dramatic pieces;

Aut agitur res in scenis, aut acta refertur,

The business of the *drama* must appear
In action or description.

FRANCIS.

is the preceding line. On the stage, what is actually represented, makes a stronger impression than what is only related; and in real life, no doubt, we should be more shocked by seeing a murder committed, than by hearing an account of it. But whether seeing a pathetic story expressed in painting, or hearing it related, has the most powerful effect, is a different question. I only say for myself, that,

on contemplating a painted tragedy, I can never help recollecting that it is acted upon canvas. This never fails to dart such a ray of comfort into my heart, as cheers it up, in spite of all the blood and carnage I see before my eyes. With a mind so vulgarly fabricated; you will not be surprised when I acknowledge, that I have felt more compassion at the sight of a single highwayman going to Tyburn, than at the massacre of two thousand innocents, though executed by Nicholas Poussin himself. This convinces me that I am not endued with the organs of a connoisseur.

But if you are violently bent upon being thought a man of very refined taste, there are books in abundance to be had, which will put you in possession of all the terms of technical applause, or censure, and furnish you with suitable expressions for the whole climax of sensibility. As for myself, I was long ago taught a lesson, which made a deep impression on my mind, and will effectually prevent me from every affectation of that kind. Very early in life, I resided above a year at Paris, and happened one day to accompany five or six of our countrymen, to view the pictures in the Palais Royal. A gentleman who affected an enthusiastic passion for the fine arts, particularly that of painting, and who had the greatest desire to be thought a connoisseur, was of the party. He had read the lives of the painters,

and had the *Voyage Pittoresque de Paris* by heart. From the moment we entered the rooms he began to display all the refinements of his taste; he instructed us what to admire, and drew us away with every sign of disgust when we stopped a moment at an uncelebrated picture. We were afraid of appearing pleased with any thing we saw, till he informed us whether or not it was worth looking at. He shook his head at some, tossed up his nose at others; commended a few, and pronounced sentence on every piece, as he passed along, with the most imposing tone of sagacity.—

“Bad, that Caravaggio is too bad indeed, devoid
“of all grace;—but here is a Caracci that
“makes amends; how charming the grief of
“that Magdalen! The Virgin, you’ll observe,
“gentlemen, is only fainting, but the Christ
“is quite dead. Look at the arm, did you
“ever see any thing so dead?—Aye, here’s
“a Madona, which they tell you is an original,
“by Guido; but any body may see that
“it is only a tolerable copy.—Pray, gentlemen,
“observe this St. Sebastian, how delightfully he
“expires: Don’t you all feel the arrow in your
“hearts? I’m sure I feel it in mine. Do let
“us move on; I should die with agony if I
“looked any longer.”

We at length came to the St. John, by Raphael, and here this man of taste stopped short in an extasy of admiration.—One of the

company had already passed it, without minding it, and was looking at another picture; on which the connoisseur bawled out—“Good God, Sir! what are you about?” The honest gentleman started, and stared around to know what crime he had been guilty of.

“Have you any eyes in your head, Sir?” continued the connoisseur: “Don’t you know St. John when you see him?”

“St. John!” replied the other, in amazement. “Aye, Sir, St. John the Baptist, *in propria persona.*”

“I don’t know what you mean, Sir,” said the gentleman, peevishly.

“Don’t you?” rejoined the connoisseur; “then I’ll endeavour to explain myself. I mean St John in the wilderness, by the divine Raffaele Sanzio da Urbino, and there he stands by your side.—Pray, my dear Sir, will you be so obliging as to bestow a little of your attention on that foot? Does it not start from the wall? Is it not perfectly out of the frame? Did you ever see such colouring? They talk of Titian; can Titian’s colouring excel that? What truth, what nature in the head! To the elegance of the antique, here is joined the simplicity of nature.”

We stood listening in silent admiration, and began to imagine we perceived all the perfections he enumerated ; when a person in the Duke of Orleans' service came and informed us, that the original, which he presumed was the picture we wished to see, was in another room ; the Duke having allowed a painter to copy it. *That* which we had been looking at was a very wretched daubing, done from the original by some obscure painter, and had been thrown, with other rubbish, into a corner ; where the Swiss had accidentally discovered it, and had hung it up merely by way of covering the vacant place on the wall, till the other should be replaced.

How the connoisseur looked on this trying occasion, I cannot say. It would have been barbarous to have turned an eye upon him.—I stepped into the next room, fully determined to be cautious in deciding on the merit of painting ; perceiving that it was not safe, in this science, to speak even from the book.

LETTER VII.

Venice.

WE acquire an early partiality for Rome, by reading the classics, and the history of the ancient republic. Other parts of Italy also interest us more on account of their having been the residence of the old Romans, than from the regard we pay to what has been transacted there during the last fourteen or fifteen centuries.

Venice claims no importance from ancient history, and boasts no connection with the Roman republic; it sprung from the ruins of that empire; and whatever its annals offer worthy of the attention of mankind, is independent of the prejudice we feel in favour of the Roman name.

The independence of Venice was not built on usurpation, nor cemented with blood; it was founded on the first law of human nature, and the undoubted rights of man.

About the middle of the fifth century, when Europe formed one continued scene of violence and bloodshed; a hatred of tyranny, a love of liberty, and a dread of the cruelty of Barbarians, prompted the Veneti, a people inhabiting a small district of Italy, a few of the inhabitants of Padua, and some peasants who lived on the fertile banks of the Po, to seek an asylum from the fury of Atilla, amongst the little islands and marshes at the bottom of the Adriatic Gulph.

Before this time some fishermen had built small houses, or huts, on one of these islands, called Rialto. The city of Padua, with a view to draw commercial advantages from this establishment, encouraged some of her inhabitants to settle there, and sent every year three or four citizens to act as magistrates. When Attila had taken and destroyed Aquileia, great numbers from all the neighbouring counties fled to Rialto; whose size being augmented by new houses, took the name of Venice, from the district from which the greater number of the earliest refugees had fled. On the death of Attila, many returned to their former habitations; but those who preferred freedom and security to all other advantages, remained at Venice. Such was the beginning of this celebrated republic. Some nice distinguishers pretend, that this was the beginning of their freedom, but not their independency; for they assert, that the Venetians were

dependent on Padua, as their mother city. It is certain that the Paduans claimed such a prerogative over this infant state, and attempted to subject her to some commercial restrictions; these were rejected by the Venetians, as arbitrary and vexatious. Disputes arose very dangerous to both; but they ended in Venice entirely throwing off the jurisdiction of Padua. It is curious, and not unworthy of serious attention in the present age, to see the parent now totally subjected to the child, whom she wished to retain in too rigorous a dependence.

The irruption of the Lombards into Italy, while it spread havoc and destruction over the adjacent country, was the cause of a great accession of strength to Venice, by the numbers of new refugees who fled to it with all the wealth they could carry, and became subjects of this state.

The Lombards themselves, while they established their kingdom in the northern parts of Italy, and subdued all the ancient district of the Veneti, thought proper to leave this little state unmolested, imagining that an attempt against it would be attended with more trouble than profit; and while they carried on more important conquests, they found it convenient to be on a good footing with Venice, whose numerous squadrons of small vessels could render the most essential services to their armies. Accordingly

leagues and treaties were formed occasionally between the two states; the Lombards in all probability imagining, that it would be in their power, at any time, to make themselves masters of this inconsiderable republic. But when that people had fully established their new kingdom, and were free from the expences of other wars, they found Venice so much increased in strength, that, however much they might have wished to comprehend it within their dominions, it appeared no longer consistent with sound policy to make the attempt. They therefore chose rather to confirm their ancient alliance by fresh treaties.

When Charlemagne overturned the kingdom of the Lombards, and, after having sent their king Didier prisoner to France, was crowned emperor at Rome, by Leo the third, the Venetian state cultivated the favour of that conqueror with so much address, that, instead of attempting any thing against their independence, he confirmed the treaty they had made with the Lombards; by which, among other things, the limits, or boundaries, between the two states, were ascertained.

In the wars with the eastern empire, and in those of later date between France and the house of Austria, Venice always endeavoured to avoid the resentment of either of the contending parties; secretly, however, assisting that which was

at the greatest distance from her own dominions, and, of consequence, the least formidable to her. Those great powers, on their parts, were so eager to humble, or to destroy, each other, that the rising vigour of Venice was permitted to grow, for ages, almost unobserved. Like the fame of Marcellus, it might have been said of that republic,

Crescit occulto vixit arbor ævo.

Like a youthful tree of growth

Insensible, high shoots his spreading fame.

FRANCIS.

And when, at length, she began to excite the jealousy of the great states of Europe, she had acquired strength and revenues sufficient to resist not only one, but great combinations of those powers leagued for her destruction.

This republic, in its various periods of increase, of meridian splendor, and of declension, has already existed for a longer time than any other of which history makes mention. The Venetians themselves assert, that this duration is owing to the excellent materials of which their government has been composed, by which they imagine it has long since been brought to the highest degree of perfection.

As I have bestowed some time since we came hither in considering the Venetian history and government, I shall, in my next, take a general view of those boasted materials, that we may be able to judge whether or not this high eulogium is well founded.

L E T T E R VIII.

Venice.

THE first form of government established at Venice, was purely democratical. Magistrates were chosen by a general assembly of the people: they were called tribunes; and as this small community inhabited several little islands, a tribune was appointed to judge causes, and distribute justice on each of those islands. His power was continued one year; at the expiration of which, he was accountable for his conduct to the general assembly of the people, who annually elected a new set of tribunes.

This simple form of government, while it marks a strict regard to that freedom so delightful to the mind of man, was found sufficient, for the space of one hundred and fifty years, to maintain order in a small community, situated at this was. At length the bad administration of some of the tribunes, discord and animosity among others, and some suspicions that the Lombards promoted civil dissention, with a view to bring the republic under their dominion,

awakened the fears of the people, and made them listen to the opinion of those who thought a change in the form of government necessary.

After various debates and proposals, it was finally determined, that a chief magistrate should be elected, as the centre of public authority, whose power might give such vigour and efficacy to the laws, as was absolutely necessary in times of danger, and whose duty should be, to direct the force of the resources of the state with promptitude; uncramped by that opposition, and consequent dilatoriness, which had been too apparent under the tribunes. This magistrate was not to be named King, but Duke, which has since been corrupted to Doge; the office was not to be hereditary, but elective; and the Doge was to enjoy it for life. It was agreed that he should have the nomination of all the inferior magistrates, and the power of making peace, and declaring war, without consulting any but such of the citizens as he should think proper.

When the election took place, all the suffrages fell upon Paul Luc Anafeste, who entered into this new office in the year 697.

The Venetians must certainly have felt great inconveniences from their former government, or have been under great dread from domestic or foreign enemies, before they could submit to

such a fundamental change in the nature of their constitution. It is evident, that, on this occasion, they seem to have lost that jealous attention to liberty which they formerly possessed; for while they withheld from their chief magistrate the name, they left him all the power, of a King. There is no period when real and enlightened patriots ought to watch with more vigilance over the rights of the people, than in times of danger from foreign enemies; for the public in general are then so much engrossed by the dangers from without, that they overlook the encroachments which are more apt, at those times than any other, to be made on their constitution from within: and it is of small importance that men defend their country from foreign foes, unless they retain such a share of internal freedom, as renders a country worth the defending.

It is highly probable, that the great degree of popularity which their first Doge had acquired before he arrived at that dignity, and the great confidence the people had in his public and private virtues, rendered them unwilling to limit the power of a person who, they were convinced, would make a good use of it. If the man had been immortal, and incorruptible, they would have been in the right: however, it must be confessed, that this Doge justified their good opinion more than favourites of the people generally do.

In the councils which he called on any matter of importance, he sent messages to those citizens, for whose judgment he had the greatest esteem, *praying*, that they would come, and assist him with their advice. This method was observed afterwards by succeeding Doges, and the citizens so sent for were called Pregadi. The Doge's council are still called Pregadi, though they have long sat independent of his invitation.

The first, and second Doge, governed with moderation and ability; but the third gave the Venetians reason to repent that they had not confined the power of the chief magistrate within narrower limits. After having served the state by his military talents, he endeavoured to enslave it; his projects were discovered; but as the improvident people, in the last arrangement of their constitution, had preserved no legal remedy for such an evil, they were obliged to use the only means now in their power. They assaulted the Doge in his palace, and put him to death without farther ceremony.

The people had conceived so much hatred for him, that, after his death, they resolved to abolish the office. In the general assembly it was agreed, that the chief magistrate, for the future, should be elected every year; that he should have the same power as formerly, while he remained in office; but, as this was to be

for a short time, they imagined he would behave with equity and moderation; and as they had an equal dislike to Doge and Tribune, he was called master of the Militia.

The form of government, introduced, by this revolution, was but of short duration. Factions arose, and became too violent for the transient authority of the Masters of Militia to restrain. The office expired five years after its institution; and, by one of those strange and unaccountable changes of sentiment, to which the multitude are so subject, the authority of the Doge was restored in the person of the son of their last Doge, whom, in a fit of furious discontent, they had assassinated. This restoration happened about the year 730.

For a long time after this, the Venetian annals display many dreadful scenes of cruelty, revolt, and assassination; Doges abusing their power, endeavouring to establish a permanent and hereditary despotism, by having their eldest sons associated in the office with themselves, and then oppressing the people with double violence. The people, on the other hand, after bearing, with the most abject patience, the capricious cruelty of their tyrants, rising at once, and murdering them, or driving them with ignominy, out of their dominions. Unable to bear either limited or absolute government, the impatient and capricious multitude wish for things

which have always been found incompatible : the secrecy, promptitude, and efficacy, of a despotic government, with all the freedom and mildness of a legal and limited constitution.

It is remarkable, that when the Doge was, even in a small degree, popular, he seldom found any difficulty in getting his son elected his associate in the sovereign authority ; and when that was not the case, there are many instances of the son being chosen directly on the death of his father.

Yet about the middle of the tenth century, the son of the Doge, Peter Candiano, took arms, and rebelled against his father. Being soon after defeated, and brought in chains to Venice, he was condemned to banishment, and declared incapable of being ever elected Doge. It appears, however, that this worthless person was a great favourite of the people ; for no sooner was his father dead, than he was chosen to succeed him, and conducted in great pomp, from Ravenna, the place of his exile, to Venice.

The Venetians were severely punished for this instance of levity. Their new Doge shewed himself as tyrannical in the character of a sovereign, as he had been undutiful in that of a son. He became a monster of pride and cruelty. The people began to murmur, and he became

susceptible of that terror which usually accompanies tyrants. He established a body of life-guards, to defend his person, and lodged them within the palace. This innovation filled the people with indignation, and awakened all their fury. They attack the palace, are repulsed by the guards, and set fire to the contiguous houses. The wretched Doge, in danger of being consumed by the flames, appears at the gate of the palace, with his infant son in his arms, imploring the compassion of the multitude; they, inexorable as demons, tear in pieces both father and child. At such an instance of savage fury, the human affections revolt from the oppressed people, and take part with their oppressor. We almost wish he had lived, that he might have swept from the earth a set of wretches more barbarous than himself.

Having spent their fury in the destruction of the tyrant, they leave the tyranny as before. No measures are taken to limit the power of the Doge.

For some time after this, a spirit of superstition seemed to lay hold of those who filled that office, as if they had intended to expiate the pride of the late tyrant by their own humility. His three immediate successors, after each of them had reigned a few years with applause, abandoned their dignity, shut themselves up in

convents, and passed the latter years of their lives as Monks.

Whatever contempt those pious Doges displayed for worldly things, their example made little impression on their subjects, who, about this time, began to monopolize the trade and riches of Europe. And some years after, when all Christendom was seized with the religious phrenzy of recovering the Holy Land, the Venetians kept so perfectly free from the general infection, that they did not scruple to supply the Saracens with arms and ammunition, in spite of the edicts of their Doges, and the remonstrances of the Pope, and other pious princes.

Those commercial casuists declared, that religion is one thing, and trade another; that, as children of the church, they were willing to believe all that their mother required; but, as merchants, they must carry their goods to the best market.

In my next, I shall proceed with my review of the Venetian government.

L E T T E R IX.

Venice.

THE minds of the Venetians were not so totally engrossed by commercial ideas, as to make them neglect other means of aggrandizing their state. All Istria submitted itself to their government: many of the free towns of Dalmatia, harassed by the Narentines, a nation of robbers and pirates on that coast, did the same. Those towns which refused, were reduced to obedience, by Peter Urseolo, the Doge of Venice, who had been sent with a fleet against them, in the year 1000. He carried his arms also into the country of the Narentines, and destroyed many of their towns.

On his return it was determined, in a general assembly of the people, that the conquered towns and provinces should be governed by magistrates sent from Venice. Those magistrates called *Podestas*, were appointed by the Doge. The inhabitants of those new-acquired towns were not admitted to the privileges of citizens of Venice, nor allowed to vote at the general assembly: the same rule was observed

with regard to the inhabitants of all the dominions afterwards acquired by the republic. It will readily occur, that this accession of dominions to the state greatly augmented the influence and power of the chief magistrate: this, and the practice of associating the son of the Doge with his father, raised jealousies among the people, and a law was made, abolishing such associations for the future.

In the year 1173, after the assassination of the Doge Michieli, a far more important alteration took place in the government. At this time there was no other tribunal at Venice than that of forty judges. This court had been established many years before: it took cognizance of all causes, civil as well as criminal, and was called the council of forty. 'This body of men, in the midst of the disorder and confusion which followed the murder of the Doge, formed a plan of new-modelling the government.

Hitherto the people had retained great privileges. They had votes in the assemblies; and, although the descendants of the ancient tribunes, and of the Doges, formed a kind of nobility, yet they had no legal privileges, or exclusive jurisdiction; nothing to distinguish them from their fellow-citizens, but what their riches, or the spontaneous respect paid to the antiquity of their families, gave them. Any

citizen, as well as they, might be elected to a public office. To acquire the honours of the state, it was absolutely necessary for the greatest and proudest Venetian, to cultivate the goodwill of the multitude, whose voice alone could raise him to the rank of Doge, and whose rage had thrown so many from the envied situation. The inconveniences, the discord, and confusion, of such a mixed multitude, had been long felt, but nobody had hitherto had the boldness to strike at this established right of the people.

The city was divided into six parts, called *Sestiers*. The council of forty procured it to be established, in the first place, that each of those *sestiers* should annually name two electors; that those twelve electors should have the right of choosing, from the whole body of the people, four hundred and seventy counsellors, who should be called the Grand Council, and who should have the same power, in all respects, which the general assembly of the people formerly enjoyed.

It was pretended, that this regulation was contrived merely to prevent confusion, and to establish regularity in the great national assembly; that the people's right of election remained as before, and, by changing the counsellors yearly, those who were not elected one year might retain hopes of being chosen the next. The people did not perceive that this law would

be fatal to their importance: it proved, however, the foundation of the aristocracy, which was soon after established, and still subsists.

The forty judges next proposed another regulation, still more delicate and important. That, to prevent the tumults and disorders which were expected at the impending election of a Doge, they should (for that time only) name eleven commissioners, from those of the highest reputation for judgment and integrity in the state; that the choice of a Doge should be left to those commissioners, nine suffrages being indispensably requisite to make the election valid.

This evidently pointed at the exclusion of the people from any concern whatever in the creation of the chief magistrate, and certainly was the object in view; yet, as it was proposed only as a temporary expedient, to prevent disorders, when men's minds were irritated against each other, and factions ran high, the regulation was agreed to.

Having, with equal dexterity and success, fixed those restraints on the power of the people, the council of forty turned their attention, in the next place, towards limiting the authority of the Doge. This was considered as too exorbitant, even for good men; and, in the hands of wicked men, had always been

perverted to the purposes of tyranny, and for which no remedy had hitherto been found, but what was almost as bad as the evils themselves; revolt on the part of the people, and all the horrors and excesses with which such an expedient is usually accompanied. The tribunal of forty therefore proposed, that the grand council should annually appoint six persons, one from each division of the city, who should form the privy council of the Doge, and, without their approbation, none of his orders should be valid; so that, instead of appointing his own privy-council, which had been the custom hitherto, the authority of the chief magistrate would, for the future, in a great measure, depend on six men, who, themselves, depended on the grand council. To be constantly surrounded by such a set of counsellors, instead of creatures of his own, however reasonable it may seem in the eyes of the impartial, would have been considered by one in possession of the dignity of the Doge, as a most intolerable innovation, and probably would have been opposed by all his influence; but there was no Doge existing when the proposal was made, and consequently it passed into a law with universal approbation.

Lastly, it was proposed to form a senate, consisting of sixty members, which were to be elected, annually, out of the grand council. This assembly was in the room of that which

the Doge formerly had the power of convoking, on extraordinary occasions, by sending messages, praying certain citizens to come, and assist him with their advice. The members of the new senate, more fixed and more independent than those of the old, are still called the Pregadi. This also was agreed to without opposition; and immediately after the funeral of the late Doge, all those regulations took place.

They began by choosing the grand council of four hundred and seventy, then the senate of sixty, then the six counsellors, and lastly, the eleven electors. These last were publicly sworn, that in the election now entrusted to them, rejecting every motive of private interest, they should give their voices for that person, whose elevation to the dignity of Doge they believed in their consciences, would prove most for the advantage of the State.

After this, they retired to a chamber of the palace, and Orio Malipier, one of the eleven, had the votes of his ten colleagues; but he, with a modesty which seems to have been unaffected, declined the office, and used all his influence with the electors to make choice of Sebastian Ziani, a man distinguished in the republic on account of his talents, his wealth, and his virtues; assuring them that, in the present emergency, *he* was a more proper person than himself for the office. Such was their

opinion of Malipier's judgment, that his colleagues adopted his opinion, and Ziani was unanimously elected.

As this mode of election was quite new, and as there was reason to imagine that the bulk of the people, on reflection, would not greatly approve of it, and that the new Doge would not be received with the usual acclamations, Ziani took care that great quantities of money should be thrown among the multitude, when he was first presented to them. No Doge was ever received with louder acclamations.

During the reign of Ziani, the singular ceremony of espousing the sea was first instituted.

Pope Alexander the Third, to avoid the resentment of the emperor Frederic Barbarossa, had taken refuge at Venice, and was protected by that State. The emperor sent a powerful fleet against it, under the command of his son Otho. Ziani met him with the fleet of Venice. A very obstinate engagement ensued, in which the Venetians were victorious. The Doge returned in triumph, with thirty of the enemy's vessels, in one of which was their commander Otho. All the inhabitants of Venice rushed to the sea shore, to meet their victorious Doge: the Pope himself came, attended by the senate and clergy. After embracing Ziani, his Holiness presented him with a ring, saying, with a loud voice,

“ Take this ring ; use it as a chain to retain the
“ sea, henceforth, in subjection to the Venetian
“ empire ; espouse the sea with this ring, and
“ let the marriage be solemnized annually, by
“ you and your successors, to the end of time,
“ that the latest posterity may know that Venice
“ has acquired the empire of the waves, and
“ that the sea is subjected to you, as a wife is
“ to her husband.”

As this speech came from the head of the church, people were not surprised to find it a little mysterious ; and the multitude, without considering whether it contained much reason or common sense, received it with the greatest applause. The marriage has been regularly celebrated every year since that time.

After the death of Ziani, if the terms which had been agreed upon previous to the election, had been literally adhered to, the grand council of four hundred and seventy would have proceeded to choose a Doge, simply by the plurality of votes ; but, for some reason which is not now known, that method was waved, and the following adopted. Four persons were chosen by the grand council, each of them had the power of naming ten ; and the whole forty had the appointing of the Doge.

Their choice fell upon the same Orio Malipier, who had declined the dignity in favour of his friend Ziani.

Under the administration of Malipier, two new forms of magistracy were created; the first was that of the Avogadors. Their duty is to take care that the laws in being should be punctually executed; and while it is the business of other magistrates to proceed against the transgressors of the laws, it is theirs to bring a process against those magistrates who neglect to put them in execution. They decide also on the nature of accusations, and determine before which of the courts every cause should be brought, not leaving it in the power of either of the parties to carry a cause to a high court, which is competent to be tried by one less expensive; and no resolution of the grand council, or senate, is valid, unless, at least, one of the three Avogadors be present during the deliberation. It is also the duty of the Avogadors to keep the originals of all the decisions and regulations of the grand council and senate, and to order them, and all other laws, to be read over, whenever they think proper, by way of refreshing the memories of the senators. If the senators are obliged to attend during those lectures, this is a very formidable power indeed. I am acquainted with senators in another country, who would sooner give their judges the power of putting them to death at once, in a less lingering manner.

The second class of magistrates, created at this time, was that called Judges al Forestieri; there

are also three of them. It is their duty to decide, in all causes between citizens and strangers, and in disputes which strangers have with each other. This institution was peculiarly expedient, at a time when the resort from all countries to Venice was very great, both on account of commerce, and of the Crusades.

In the year 1192, after a very able administration, Malipier, who was of a very philosophical turn of mind, abdicated the office of Doge, and Henry Dandolo was elected in his place.

I am a great deal too much fatigued with the preceding narrative, to accompany one of his active and enterprising genius at present; and I have good reason to suspect, that you also have been, for some time past, inclined to repose.

LETTER X.

Venice.

HENRY Dandolo, had, in his early years, passed, with general approbation, through many of the subordinate offices of government; and had, a few years before he was elected to the dignity of Doge, been Ambassador at the court of Manuel, the Greek emperor at Constantinople. There, on account of his inflexible integrity, and his refusing to enter into the views of Manuel, which he thought contrary to the interest of his country, his eyes were almost entirely put out, by order of that tyrant. Notwithstanding this impediment, and his great age, being above eighty, he was now elected to the office of Doge.

At this time, some of the most powerful princes and nobles of France and Flanders, instigated by the zeal of Innocent the Third, and still more by their own pious fervour, resolved, in a fourth crusade, to attempt the recovery of the Holy Land, and the sepulchre of Christ, from the hands of Infidels; and being, by the fate of

others, taught the difficulties and dangers of transporting armies by land, they resolved to take their passage from Europe to Asia by sea. On this occasion they applied to the Venetian State, who not only agreed to furnish ships for the transportation of the army, but also to join, with an armed fleet, as principals in the expedition.

The French army arrived soon after in the Venetian State; but so ill had they calculated, that, when every thing was ready for the embarkation, part of the sum which they had agreed to pay for the transporting their troops, was deficient. This occasioned disputes between the French leaders and the State, which the Doge put an end to, by proposing, that they should pay in military services what they could not furnish in money. This was accepted, and the first exploits of the Crusade army were, the reduction of the town of Zara, and other places in Dalmatia, which had revolted from the Venetians. It had been previously agreed, that, after this service, the army should embark immediately for Egypt; but Dandolo, who had another project more at heart, represented that the season was too far advanced, and found means to persuade the French army to winter at Dalmatia.

During this interval, Dandolo, availing himself of some favourable circumstances, had the

dexterity to determine the French Crusaders, in spite of the interdiction of the Pope, to join with the Venetian forces, and to carry their arms against the emperor of Constantinople; an expedition which, Dandolo asserted, would facilitate their original plan against the Holy Land, and which, he was convinced, would be attended with far greater advantages to both parties.

The crown of Constantinople was never surrounded with greater dangers, nor has it ever known more sudden revolutions, than at this period.

Manuel, who had treated Dandolo, while ambassador, with so much barbarity, had been precipitated from the throne. His immediate successor had, a short time after, experienced the same fate. Betrayed by his own brother, his eyes had been put out, and, in that deplorable condition, he was kept close prisoner by the usurper. The son of this unfortunate man had escaped from Constantinople, and had arrived at Venice, to implore the protection of that State: the compassion which his misfortune naturally excited, had considerable effect in promoting the Doge's favourite scheme of leading the French and Venetian forces against Constantinople. The indefatigable Dandolo went, in person, at the head of his countrymen. The united army beat the troops of the usurper in repeated battles, obliged him to fly from Constantinople,

placed his brother on the throne, and restored to him his son Alexis, who had been obliged to take refuge at Venice, from the cruelty of his uncle, and had accompanied Dandolo in this successful enterprise.

A misunderstanding soon after ensued between the united armies and Alexis, now associated with his father on the throne of Constantinople. The Greeks murmured at the favour which their emperor shewed to those foreigners; and thought his liberality to them inconsistent with his duty to his own subjects. The Crusaders, on the other hand, imagined, that all the wealth of his empire was hardly sufficient to repay the obligations he owed to them. The young prince, desirous to be just to the one, and grateful to the other, lost the confidence of both; and while he strove to conciliate the minds of two sets of men, whose views and interests were opposite, he was betrayed by Murtsuphlo, a Greek, who had gained his confidence, and whom he had raised to the highest dignities of the empire. This traitor insinuated to the Greeks, that Alexis had agreed to deliver up Constantinople to be pillaged, that he might satisfy the avarice and rapacity of those strangers who had restored his family to the throne. The people fly to arms, the palace is invested, Alexis and his father are put to death, and Murtsuphlo is declared emperor.

These transactions, though ascertained by the authenticity of history, seem as rapid as the revolutions of a theatrical representation.

The chiefs of the united army, struck with horror and indignation, assemble in council. Dandolo, always decisive in the moment of danger, gives it as his opinion, that they should immediately declare war against the usurper, and make themselves masters of the empire. This opinion prevails, and the conquest of the Greek empire is resolved upon.

After several bloody battles, and various assaults, the united armies of France and Venice enter victorious into Constantinople, and divide the spoils of that wealthy city.

The Doge, never so much blinded with success as to lose sight of the true interest of his country, did not think of procuring for the republic, large dominions on the continent. The Venetians had, for their share, the island of the Archipelago, several ports on the coast of the Hellespont, the Morea, and the entire island of Candia. This was a judicious partition for Venice, the augmentation of whose strength depended on commerce, navigation, and the empire of the sea.

Though the star of Dandolo rose in obscurity, and shone with no extraordinary lustre at its meridian height, yet nothing ever surpassed the brilliancy of its setting rays.

This extraordinary man died at Constantino-
ple, oppressed with age, but while the laurels,
which adorned his hoary head, were in youthful
verdure.

The annals of mankind present nothing more
worthy of our admiration. A man, above the
age of eighty, and almost entirely deprived of
his sight, despising the repose necessary for age,
and the secure honours which attended him at
home; engaging in a hazardous enterprize,
against a distant and powerful enemy; support-
ing the fatigues of a military life with the spirit
of youth, and the perseverance of a veteran, in
a superstitious age; and, while he led an army
of religious enthusiasts, braving, at once, the
indignation of the Pope, the prejudices of bigots,
and all the dangers of war; displaying the ar-
dour of a conqueror, the judgment of a statef-
man, and the disinterested spirit of a patriot;
preparing distant events, improving accidental
circumstances, managing the most impetuous
characters; and, with admirable address, mak-
ing all subservient to the vast plan he had con-
ceived, for the aggrandizing his native country.
Yet this man passed his youth, manhood, and
great part of his old age, unknown. Had he
died at seventy, his name would have been
swept, with the common rubbish of courts and
capitals, into the gulph of oblivion. So neces-
sary are occasions and situations, for bringing
into light the concealed vigour of the greatest

characters; and so true it is, that while we see at the head of kingdoms, men of the most vulgar abilities, the periods of whose existence serve only as dates to History, many whose talents and virtues would have swelled her brightest pages have died unnoted, from the obscurity of their situations, or the languor and stupidity of the ages in which they lived.

But the romantic story of Henry Dandolo has seduced me from my original purpose, which was, to give you an idea of the rise and progress of the Venetian aristocracy, and which I shall resume in my next.

LETTER XI.

V. vice.

THE senate of Venice, ever jealous of their civil liberty, while they rejoiced at the vast acquisitions lately made by their fleet and army, perceived that those new conquests might tend to the ruin of the constitution, by augmenting the power and influence of the first magistrate.

In the year 1206, immediately after they were informed of the death of Dandolo, they created six new magistrates, called Correctors; and this institution has been renewed at every interregnum which has happened since.

The duty of those Correctors is, to examine into all abuses which may have taken place during the reign of the preceding Doge, and report them to the senate, that they may be remedied, and prevented for the future by wholesome laws, before the election of another Doge. At the same time it was ordained, that the state should be indemnified out of the fortune of the deceased magistrate, from any detriment it had

sustained by his mal-administration, of which the senate were to be judges. This law was certainly well calculated to make the Doge very circumspect in his conduct, and has been the origin of all the future restraints which have been laid on that very unenviable office.

Men accustomed to the calm and secure enjoyments of private life, are apt to imagine, that no mortal would be fond of any office on such conditions; but the senate of Venice, from more extensive views of human nature, knew that there always was a sufficient number of men, eager to grasp the sceptre of ambition, in defiance of all the thorns with which it could be surrounded.

It was not the intention of the Venetian senate to throw the smallest stain on the character of their late patriotic Doge; nevertheless they thought the interregnum after his death, the most favourable opportunity of passing this law; because, when the Inquisition had taken place after his glorious reign, no Doge could expect that it would ever afterwards be dispensed with.

The Correctors having been chosen, and the inquisition made, Peter Ziani was elected Doge. In his reign a court for civil causes, denominated the Tribunal of forty, was created. Its name

sufficiently explains the intention of establishing this court, to which there is an appeal from the decisions of all the inferior magistrates in civil causes tried within the city. It is to be distinguished from the court of Forty, formerly mentioned, whose jurisdiction was now confined to criminal causes: it afterwards got the name of *old* civil council of Forty, to distinguish it from a third court, consisting also of forty members, which was established at a subsequent period, to decide, by appeal, in all civil causes, from the judgments of the inferior courts without the city of Venice.

Towards the end of his life, about the year 1228, Ziani abdicated his office. At the election of his successor, the suffrages were equally divided, between Rainer Dandolo, and James Theipolo. This prolonged the interregnum for two months; as often as they were ballotted, during that time, each of them had twenty balls. The senate, at last, ordained them to draw lots, which decided in favour of Theipolo.

During his administration, the Venetian code was, in some degree, reformed and abridged. One of the greatest inconveniences of freedom, is the number of laws necessary to protect the life and property of each citizen; the natural consequences of which are, a multitude of lawyers, with all the suits and vexations which

they create; "les peines, les dépenses, les longueurs, les dangers mêmes de la justice," says Montesquieu, "sont le prix que chaque citoyen donne pour la liberté." The more freedom remains in a State, of the higher importance will the life and property of each citizen be considered. A despotic government counts the life of a citizen as of no importance at all.

The Doge Theipolo, who had himself been a lawyer, as many of the Venetian nobles at that time were, bestowed infinite labour in arranging and illuminating the vast chaos of laws and regulations in which the jurisprudence of a republic, so jealous of her liberty, had been involved. After a long reign, he abdicated the government, and, to prevent the inconveniency which had happened at his election, the number of electors, by a new decree of the senate, was augmented to forty-one.

In the reign of his successor, Marino Marfini, two judges, called Criminal Judges of the Night, were appointed. Their function is to judge of what are called nocturnal crimes, under which denomination are reckoned robberies, wilful fire, rapes, and bigamy. We find also, that Jews lying with Christian women, is enumerated among nocturnal crimes; though, by an unjustifiable partiality, a Christian man lying with a Jewish woman, whether by night or day, is not mentioned as any crime at all.

A few years after, in the reign of the Doge Rainier Zeno, four more judges were added to this tribunal; and, during the interregnum which took place at his death, in the year 1268, a new form of electing the Doge was fixed, which, though somewhat complicated, has been observed ever since.

All the members of the grand council, who are past thirty years of age, being assembled in the hall of the palace, as many balls are put into an urn as there are members present; thirty of these balls are gilt, and the rest white. Each counsellor draws one; and those who get the gilt balls, go into another room, where there is an urn, containing thirty balls, nine of which are gilt. The thirty members draw again; and those who, by a second piece of good fortune, get the gilt balls, are the *first electors*, and have a right to choose forty, among whom they comprehend themselves.

Those forty, by balloting in the same manner as in the former instances, are reduced to twelve *second electors*, who choose twenty-five, the first of the twelve naming three, and the remaining eleven two a-piece. All those being assembled in a chamber apart, each of them draws a ball from an urn, containing twenty-five balls, among which are nine gilt. This reduces them to nine *third electors*, each of

whom chooses five, making in all forty-five; who, as in the preceding instances, are reduced by ballot, to eleven *fourth electors*, and they have the nomination of forty-one, who are the *direct electors* of the Doge. Being shut up by themselves, they begin by choosing three chiefs, and two secretaries; each elector, being then called, throws a little billet into an urn, which stands on a table before the chiefs. On this billet is inscribed the person's name whom the elector wishes to be Doge.

The secretaries then in the presence of the chiefs, and of the whole assembly, open the billets. Among all the forty-one there are, generally, but a very few different names, as the election, for the most part, balances between two or three candidates. Their names, whatever is the number, are put into another urn, and drawn out one after another. As soon as a name is extracted, the Secretary reads it, and, if the person to whom it belongs is present, he immediately retires. One of the chiefs then demands, with a loud voice, whether any crime can be laid to this person's charge, or any objection made to his being raised to the sovereign dignity? If any objection is made, the accused is called in, and heard in his own defence; after which the electors proceed to give their decision, by throwing a ball into one of two boxes, one of

which is for the Ayes, the other for the Noes. The Secretaries then count the balls, and if there are twenty-five in the first, the election is finished; if not, another name is read, and the same inquisition made as before, till there are twenty-five approving balls.

This form, wherein judgment and chance are so perfectly blended, precludes every attempt to corrupt the electors, and all cabals for the Ducal dignity; for who could dream, by any labour or contrivance, of gaining an election, the mode of whose procedure equally baffles the address of a politician and a juggler?

Lawrence Theipolo was the first Doge chosen according to this mode. In his reign the office of Grand Chancellor was created.

Hitherto the public acts were signed by certain persons chosen by the Doge himself, and called Chancellors; but the Grand Council, which we find always solicitous to limit the power of the Doge, thought *that* method improper; and now proposed, that a Chancellor should be appointed by themselves, with rights and privileges intirely independent of the Doge. At the same time, as the people had shewn symptoms of discontent, on account of the great offices being all in the distinguished families, it was thought expedient to ordain, that the Chancellor should always be taken from among

the Secretaries of the senate, who were citizens. Afterwards, when the council of ten came to be established, it was ordained, that the Chancellor might be chosen either from the Secretaries of that court, or from those of the senate.

The Grand Chancellor of Venice is an officer of great dignity and importance; he has the keeping of the great seal of the Commonwealth, and is privy to all the secrets of the State; he is considered as the head of the order of citizens, and his office is the most lucrative in the republic; yet, though he must be present at all the councils, he has no deliberative voice.

In perusing the annals of this republic, we continually meet with proofs of the restless jealousy of this government; even the private oeconomy of families sometimes created suspicion, however blameless the public conduct of the master might be. The present Doge had married a foreign lady; his two sons followed his example; one of their wives was a princess. This gave umbrage to the senate; they thought that, by such means, the nobles might acquire an interest, and connexions, in other countries, inconsistent with their duty as citizens of Venice; and therefore, in the interregnum which followed the death of Theipolo, a law was proposed by the Correctors, and immediately passed, by which all future Doges, and their sons,

were interdicted from marriage with foreigners, under the pain of being excluded from the office of Doge.

Though the people had been gradually, as we have seen, deprived of their original right of electing the chief magistrate; yet, on the elections which succeeded the establishment of the new mode, the Doge had always been presented to the multitude assembled in St. Mark's Place, as if requesting their approbation; and the people, flattered with this small degree of attention, had never failed to announce their satisfaction by repeated shouts: but the senate seem to have been afraid of leaving them even this empty shadow of their ancient power; for they ordained, that, instead of presenting the Doge to the multitude, to receive their acclamations, as formerly, a Syndic, for the future, should, in the name of the people, congratulate the new Doge on his election. On this occasion, the senate do not seem to have acted with their usual discernment. Show often affects the minds of men more than substance, as appeared in the present instance; for the Venetian populace displayed more resentment on being deprived of this noisy piece of form, than when the substantial right had been taken from them. After the death of the Doge John Dandolo, before a new election could take place in the usual forms, a prodigious multitude assembled in St. Mark's Place, and, with

loud acclamations, proclaimed James Theipolo ; declaring, that this was more binding than any other mode of election, and that he was Doge to all intents and purposes. While the senate remained in fearful suspense for the consequences of an event so alarming and unlooked-for, they were informed, that Theipolo had withdrawn himself from the city, with a determination to remain concealed, till he heard how the senate and people would settle the dispute.

The people, having no person of weight to conduct or head them, renounced, with their usual fickleness, a project which they had begun with their usual intrepidity.

The Grand Council, freed from alarm, proceeded to a regular election, and chose Peter Gradonico, a man of enterprise, firmness, and address, in whose reign we shall see the dying embers of democracy perfectly extinguished.

LETTER XII.

Venice.

GRADONICO, from the moment he was in possession of the office of Doge, formed a scheme of depriving the people of all their remaining power. An aversion to popular government, and resentment of some signs of personal dislike, which the populace had shewn at his election, seem to have been his only motives; for, while he completely annihilated the ancient rights of the people, he shewed no inclination to augment the power of his own office.

Although the people had experienced many mortifying deviations from the old constitution, yet, as the Grand Council was chosen annually, by electors of their own nomination, they flattered themselves that they still retained an important share in the government. It was this last hold of their declining freedom which Gradonico meditated to remove, for ever, from their hands. Such a project was of a nature to have intimidated a man of less courage; but his natural intrepidity, animated by resentment, made him overlook all dangers and difficulties.

He began (as if by way of experiment) with some alterations respecting the manner of choosing the Grand Council; these, however, occasioned murmurs; and it was feared, that dangerous tumults would arise at the next election of that court.

But, superior to fear, Gradonico inspired others with courage; and, before the period of the election arrived, he struck the decisive blow.

A law was published in the year 1297, by which it was ordained, that those who actually belonged to the Grand Council, should continue members of it for life; and that the same right should descend to their posterity, without any form of election whatever. This was at once forming a body of hereditary legislative nobility, and establishing a complete aristocracy, upon the ruins of the ancient popular government.

This measure struck all the citizens, who were not then of the Grand Council, with concern and astonishment; but, in a particular manner, those of ancient and noble families; for although, as has been already observed, there was, strictly speaking, no nobility with exclusive privileges before this law, yet there were in Venice, as there must be in the most democratical republics, certain families considered

as more honourable than others, many of whom found themselves, by this law, thrown into a rank inferior to that of the least considerable person who happened, at this important period, to be a member of the Grand Council. To conciliate the minds of such dangerous malcontents, exceptions were made in their favour, and some of the most powerful were immediately received into the Grand Council; and to others it was promised that they should, at some future period, be admitted. By such hopes, artfully insinuated, and by the great influence of the members who actually composed the Grand Council, all immediate insurrections were prevented; and foreign wars, and objects of commerce, soon turned the people's attention from this mortifying change in the nature of the government.

A strong resentment of those innovations, however, festered in the breasts of some individuals, who, a few years after, under the direction of one Marino Bocconi, formed a design to assassinate Gradonico, and massacre all the Grand Council, without distinction. This plot was discovered and the chiefs, after confessing their crimes, were executed between the pillars.

The conspiracy of Bocconi was confined to malcontents of the rank of citizens; but one of a more dangerous nature, and which

originated among the nobles themselves was formed in the year 1309.

This combination was made up of some of the most distinguished of those who were not of the Grand Council when the reform took place, and who had not been admitted afterwards, according to their expectations; and of some others of very ancient families, who could not bear to see so many citizens raised to a level with themselves, and who, besides, were piqued at what they called the Pride of Gradenico. These men chose for their leader, the son of James Theipolo, who had been proclaimed Doge by the populace. Their object was, to dispossess Gradenico, and restore the ancient constitution; they were soon joined by a great many of inferior rank, within the city, and they engaged considerable numbers of their friends and dependents from Padua, and the adjacent country, to come to Venice, and assist them, at the time appointed for the insurrection. Considering the numbers that were privy to this undertaking, it is astonishing that it was not discovered till the night preceding that on which it was to have taken place. The uncommon concourse of strangers created the first suspicion, which was confirmed by the confession of some who were acquainted with the design. The Doge immediately summoned the council, and sent expresses to the governors of the neighbouring towns and forts, with orders for them

to hasten with their forces to Venice. The conspirators were not disconcerted; they assembled, and attacked the Doge and his friends, who were collected in a body around the palace. The Place of St. Mark was the scene of this tumultuous battle, which lasted many hours, but was attended with more noise and terror among the inhabitants, than bloodshed to the combatants. Some of the military governors arriving with troops, the contest ended in the rout of the conspirators. A few nobles had been killed in the engagement; a greater number were executed by order of the senate. Theipolo, who had fled, was declared infamous, and an enemy to his country; his goods and fortune were confiscated, and his house razed to the ground. After these executions, it was thought expedient, to receive into the Grand Council, several of the most distinguished families of citizens.

Those two conspiracies having immediately followed one another, spread an universal diffidence and dread over the city, and gave rise to the court called the Council of Ten, which was erected about this time, merely as a temporary Tribunal, to examine into the causes, punish the accomplices, and destroy the seeds of the late conspiracy; but which, in the sequel, became permanent. I shall wave farther mention of this court, till we come to the period

when the State Inquisitors were established; but it is proper to mention, that the Ecclesiastical Court of Inquisition was also erected at Venice, in the reign of the Doge Gradonico.

The Popes had long endeavoured to introduce this court into every country in Europe; they succeeded too well in many; but though it was not entirely rejected by the State of Venice, yet it was accepted under such restrictions as have prevented the dismal cruelties which accompany it in other countries.

This republic seems, at all times, to have a strong impression of the ambitious and encroaching spirit of the court of Rome; and has, on all occasions, shewn the greatest unwillingness to entrust power in the hands of ecclesiastics. Of this, the Venetians gave an undoubted proof at present; for while they established a new civil Court of Inquisition, with the most unlimited powers, they would not receive the ecclesiastical inquisition, except on conditions to which it had not been subjected in any other country.

The court of Rome never displayed more address than in its attempts to elude those limitations, and to prevail on the senate to admit the inquisition at Venice, on the same footing as it had been received elsewhere; but the senate was as firm as the Pope was artful, and

the Court of Inquisition was at last established, under the following conditions :

That three commissioners from the Senate should attend the deliberations of that court, none of whose decrees could be executed without the approbation of the commissioners.

Those commissioners were to take no oath of fidelity, or engagement of any kind, to the Inquisition ; but were bound by oath to conceal nothing from the senate which should pass in the Holy Office.

That heresy should be the only crime cognisable by the Inquisition ; and, in case of the conviction and condemnation of any criminal, his goods and money should not belong to the court, but to his natural heirs.

That Jews and Greeks should be indulged in the exercise of their religion, without being disturbed by this court.

The commissioners were to prevent the registration of any statute made at Rome ; or any where out of the Venetian State.

The Inquisitors were not permitted to condemn books as heretical, without the concurrence of the Senate ; nor were they allowed to

judge any to be so, but those already condemned by the edict of Clement VIII.

Such were the restrictions under which the Inquisition was established at Venice; and nothing can more clearly prove their efficacy, than a comparison of their numbers, who have suffered for heresy here, with those who have been condemned to death by that court in every other place where it was established.

An instance is recorded of a man, named Narino, being condemned to a public punishment, for having composed a book in defence of the opinions of John Huss. For this (the greatest of all crimes in the sight of Inquisitors) his sentence was, that he should be exposed publicly on a scaffold, dressed in a gown, with flames and devils painted on it. The moderation of the civil magistrate appears in this sentence. Without his interposition, the flames which surrounded the prisoner would, in all probability, not have been painted. This, which is mentioned in the History of Venice as an instance of severity, happened at a time, when, in Spain and Portugal, many wretches were burnt, by order of the Inquisition, for smaller offences.

In 1354, during the interregnum after the death of Andrew Dandolo, it was proposed, by the Correctors of Abuses, that, for the future,

the three chiefs of the Criminal Council of Forty should be members of the College; and this passed into a law.

It may be necessary to mention, that the College, otherwise called the Seigniory, is the supreme cabinet council of the State. This court was originally composed of the Doge and six counsellors only; but to these, at different periods, were added, first, six of the Grand Council, chosen by the Senate; they were called Savii, or Sages, from their supposed wisdom; and afterwards, five Savii, of the Terra Firma, whose more immediate duty is to superintend the business of the towns and provinces belonging to the republic, on the continent of Europe, particularly what regards the troops. At one time there were also five Savii for maritime affairs, but they had little business after the Venetian navy became inconsiderable; and now, in the room of them, five young noblemen are chosen by the Senate every six months, who attend the meetings of the Seigniory, without having a vote, though they give their opinions when asked. This is by way of instructing, and rendering them fit for the affairs of State. They are called Sages of the Orders, and are chosen every six months.

To those were added, the three chiefs of the Criminal Court of Forty; the court then consisting, in all, of twenty-six members.

The College is, at once, the cabinet council, and the representative of the republic. This court gives audience, and delivers answers, in the name of the republic, to foreign Ambassadors, to the deputies of towns and provinces, and to the generals of the army; it also receives all requests and memorials on State affairs, summons the Senate at pleasure, and arranges the business to be discussed in that assembly

In the Venetian government, great care is taken to balance the power of one court by that of another, and to make them reciprocal checks on each other. It was probably from a jealousy of the power of the College, that three chiefs of the Criminal Court of Forty were now added to it.

L E T T E R XIII.

Venice.

TH E history of no nation presents a greater variety of singular events than that of Venice. We have seen a conspiracy against this State, originating among the citizens, and carried on by people of that rank only. We saw another, soon after, which took its origin among the body of the nobles; but the year 1355 presents us with one of a still more extraordinary nature, begun, and carried on, by the Doge himself. If ambition, or the augmentation of his own power, had been the object, it would not have been so surprising; but his motive to the conspiracy was as small as the intention was dreadful.

Marino Falliero, Doge of Venice, was, at this time, eighty years of age; a time of life when the violence of the passions is generally pretty much abated. He had, even then, however, given a strong instance of the rashness of his disposition, by marrying a very young woman. This lady imagined she had been affronted by a young Venetian nobleman at a public ball,

and she complained bitterly of the insult to her husband. The old Doge, who had all the desire imaginable to please his wife, determined, in this matter at least, to give her ample satisfaction.

The delinquent was brought before the Judges, and the crime was exaggerated with all the eloquence that money could purchase; but they viewed the affair with unprejudiced eyes, and pronounced a sentence no more than adequate to the crime. The Doge was filled with the most extravagant rage, and, finding that the body of the nobles took no share in his wrath, he entered into a conspiracy with the Admiral of the arsenal, and some others, who were discontented with the government on other accounts, and projected a method of vindicating his wife's honour, which seems rather violent for the occasion. It was resolved by those desperadoes, to massacre the whole Grand Council. Such a scene of bloodshed, on account of one woman, has not been imagined since the Trojan war.

This plot was conducted with more secrecy than could have been expected, from a man who seems to have been deprived of reason, as well as humanity. Every thing was prepared; and the day, previous to that which was fixed for the execution, had arrived, without any

person but those concerned in the conspiracy, having the least knowledge of the horrid design.

It was discovered in the same manner in which that against the King and Parliament of England, was brought to light in the time of James the first.

Bertrand Bergamese, one of the conspirators; being desirous to save Nicolas Lioni, a noble Venetian, from the general massacre, called on him, and earnestly admonished him, on no account, to go out of his house the following day; for, if he did, he would certainly lose his life. Lioni pressed him to give some reason for this extraordinary advice; which the other obstinately refusing, Lioni ordered him to be seized, and confined; and sending for some of his friends of the Senate, by means of promises and threats, they at length prevailed on the prisoner to discover the whole of this horrid mystery.

They send for the Avogadors, the Council of Ten, and other high officers, by whom the prisoner was examined; after which, orders were given for seizing the principal conspirators in their houses, and for summoning those of the nobility and citizens, on whose fidelity the Council could rely. These measures could not be taken so secretly as not to alarm many, who

found means to make their escape. A considerable number were arrested, among whom were two chiefs of the conspiracy under the Doge. They being put to the question, confessed the whole. It appeared, that only a select body of the principal men had been privy to the real design; great numbers had been desired to be prepared with arms, at a particular hour, when they would be employed in attacking certain enemies of the State, which were not named; they were desired to keep those orders a perfect secret, and were told, that upon their fidelity and secrecy their future fortunes depended. Those men did not know each other, and had no suspicion that it was not a lawful enterprise for which they were thus engaged; they were therefore set at liberty; but all the chiefs of the plot gave the fullest evidence against the Doge. It was proved, that the whole scheme had been formed by his direction, and supported by his influence. After the principal conspirators were tried, and executed, the Council of Ten next proceeded to the trial of the Doge himself. They desired that twenty senators, of the highest reputation, might assist upon this solemn occasion; and that two relations of the Fallier family, one of whom was a member of the Council of Ten, and the other an Avogador, might withdraw from the court.

The Doge, who hitherto had remained under a guard in his own apartments in the palace,

was now brought before this Tribunal of his own subjects. He was dressed in the robes of his office.

It is thought he intended to have denied the charge, and attempted a defence; but when he perceived the number and nature of the proofs against him, overwhelmed by their force, he acknowledged his guilt, with many fruitless and abject intreaties for mercy.

That a man, of eighty years of age, should lose all firmness on such an occasion, is not marvellous; that he should have been incited, by a trifling offence, to such an inhuman, and such a deliberate plan of wickedness, is without example.

He was sentenced to lose his head. The sentence was executed in the place where the Doges are usually crowned.

In the Great Chamber of the palace, where the portraits of the Doges are placed, there is a vacant space between the portraits of Fallier's immediate predecessor and successor, with this inscription:

Locus Marini Fallieri decapitati.

The place intended for the portrait of Marinus Fallierus who was beheaded.

The only other instance which history presents to our contemplation, of a sovereign tried according to the form of laws, and condemned to death by a Tribunal of his own subjects is that of Charles the First, of Great Britain. But how different are we affected by a review of the two cases!

In the one, the original errors of the misguided Prince are forgotten in the severity of his fate, and in the calm majestic firmness with which he bore it. Those who, from public spirit, had opposed the unconstitutional measures of his government, were no more; and the men now in power were actuated by far different principles. All the passions of humanity, therefore, take part with the royal sufferer; nothing but the ungenerous spirit of party can seduce them to the side of his enemies. In his trial we behold, with a mixture of pity and indignation, the unhappy monarch delivered up to the malice of hypocrites, the rage of fanatics, and the insolence of a low-born law ruffian.

In the other, every sentiment of compassion is effaced by horror, at the enormity of the crime.

In the year 1361, after the death of the Doge John Delfino, when the last electors were confined in the Ducal Chamber to choose his successor, and while the election vibrated between

three candidates, a report arrived at Venice, that Laurentius Celfus, who commanded the fleet, had obtained a complete victory over the Genoese, who were at that time at war with the Venetians. This intelligence was communicated to the electors, who immediately dropped all the three candidates, and unanimously chose this commander. Soon after, it was found, that the rumour of the victory was entirely groundless. This could not affect the validity of the election; but it produced a decree to prevent, on future occasions of the same kind, all communication between the people without, and the conclave of electors.

This Doge's father displayed a singular instance of weakness and vanity, which some of the historians have thought worth transmitting to us. I do not know for what reason, unless it be to comfort posterity with the reflection, that human folly is much the same in all ages, and that their ancestors have not been a great deal wiser than themselves. This old gentleman thought it beneath the dignity of a father to pull off his cap to his own son; and that he might not seem to condescend so far, even when all the other nobles shewed this mark of respect to their sovereign, he went, from the moment of his son's election, upon all occasions, and in all weather, with his head uncovered. The Doge being solicitous for his father's health, and finding that no persuasion or explanation of the

matter, that could be given, were sufficient to overcome this obstinacy, recollected that he was as devout as he was vain, which suggested an expedient that had the desired effect. He placed a cross on the front of his ducal coronet. The old man was as desirous to testify his respect to the cross, as he was averse to pay obeisance to his son; and unable to devise any way of pulling off a cap which he never wore, his piety, at length, got the better of his pride; he resumed his cap, as formerly, that, as often as his son appeared, he might pull it off in honour of the cross.

During the reign of Laurentius Celsus, the celebrated poet Petrarch, who resided for some time at Venice, and was pleased with the manners of the people, and the wisdom of their government, made a present to the republic, of his collection of books; which, at that time, was reckoned very valuable. This was the foundation of the great library of St. Mark.

In perusing the annals of Venice, we continually meet with new institutions. No sooner is any inconveniency perceived, than measures are taken to remove it, or guard against its effects. About this time, three new magistrates were appointed, whose duty is to prevent all ostentatious luxuries in dress, equipage, and other expensive superfluities, and to prosecute those who transgress the sumptuary laws, which comprehend such objects. Those magistrates

are called *Sopra Proveditori alle Pompé*; they were allowed a discretionary power of levying fines, from people of certain professions, who deal entirely in articles of luxury. Of this number, that of public courtesans was reckoned. This profession, according to all accounts, formerly flourished at Venice, with a degree of splendour unknown in any other capital of Europe; and very considerable exactions were raised to the use of the State, at particular times, from the wealthiest of those dealers. This excise, it would appear, has been pushed beyond what the trade could bear; for it is at present in a state of wretchedness and decay; the best of the business, as is said, being now carried on, for mere pleasure, by people who do not avow themselves of the profession.

L E T T E R XIV.

Venice.

No government was ever more punctual, and impartial, than that of Venice, in the execution of the laws. This was thought essential to the well-being, and very existence, of the State. For this, all respect for individuals, all private considerations whatever, and every compunctious feeling of the heart, is sacrificed. To execute law with all the rigour of justice, is considered as the chief virtue of a judge; and, as there are cases in which the sternest may relent, the Venetian government has taken care to appoint certain magistrates, whose sole business is to see that others perform their duty upon all occasions.

All this is very fine in the abstract, but we often find it detestable in the application.

In the year 1400, while Antonio Venier was Doge, his son having committed an offence which evidently sprung from mere youthful levity, and nothing worse, was condemned in

a fine of one hundred ducats, and to be imprisoned for a certain time.

While the young man was in prison, he fell sick, and petitioned to be removed to a purer air. The Doge rejected the petition; declaring, that the sentence must be executed literally; and that his son must take the fortune of others in the same predicament. The youth was much beloved, and many applications were made, that the sentence might be softened, on account of the danger which threatened him. The father was inexorable, and the son died in prison. Of whatever refined substance this man's heart may have been composed, I am better pleased that mine is made of the common materials.

Carlo Zeno was accused, by the Council of Ten, of having received a sum of money from Francis Carraro, son of the Seignior of Padua, contrary to an express law, which forbids all subjects of Venice, on any pretext whatever, accepting any salary, pension, or gratification, from a foreign Prince of State. This accusation was grounded on a paper found among Carraro's accounts, when Padua was taken by the Venetians. In this paper was an article of four hundred ducats paid to Carlo Zeno, who declared, in his defence, that while he was, by the Senate's permission, governor of the Milanese, he had visited Carraro, then a prisoner

in the castle of Asti; and finding him in want common necessities, he had advanced of to him the sum in question; and that this Prince, having been liberated some short time after, had, on his return to Padua, repaid the money.

Zeno was a man of acknowledged candour, and of the highest reputation; he had commanded the fleets and armies of the State with the most brilliant success; yet neither this, nor any other considerations, prevailed on the Court to depart from their usual severity. They owned that, from Zeno's usual integrity, there was no reason to doubt the truth of his declaration; but the assertions of an accused person were not sufficient to efface the force of the presumptive circumstances which appeared against him.—His declaration might be convincing to those who knew him intimately; but was not legal evidence of his innocence; and they adhered to a distinguishing maxim of this Court, that it is of more importance to the State, to intimidate every one from even the appearance of such a crime, than to allow a person, against whom a presumption of guilt remained, to escape, however innocent he might be. This man, who had rendered the most essential services to the republic, and had gained many victories, was condemned to be removed from all his offices, and to be imprisoned for two years.

But the most affecting instance of the odious inflexibility of Venetian courts, appears in the case of Foscari, son to the Doge of that name.

This young man had, by some imprudences, given offence to the Senate, and was, by their orders, confined at Treviso, when Almor Donato, one of the Council of Ten, was assassinated, on the 5th of November 1750, as he entered his own house.

A reward, in ready money, with pardon for this, or any other crime, and a pension of two hundred ducats, revertible to children, was promised to any person who would discover the planner, or perpetrator, of this crime. No such discovery was made.

One of young Foscari's footmen, named Olivier, had been observed loitering near Donato's house on the evening of the murder;—he fled from Venice next morning. These, with other circumstances of less importance, created a strong suspicion that Foscari had engaged this man to commit the murder.

Olivier was taken, brought to Venice, put to the torture, and confessed nothing; yet the Council of Ten, being prepossessed with an opinion of their guilt, and imagining that the master would have less resolution, used him in the same cruel manner.—The unhappy young man, in

the midst of his agony, continued to assert, that he knew nothing of the assassination. This convinced the Court of his firmness, but not of his innocence; yet as there was no legal proof of his guilt, they could not sentence him to death. He was condemned to pass the rest of his life in banishment, at Canéa, in the island of Candia.

This unfortunate youth bore his exile with more impatience than he had done the rack; he often wrote to his relations and friends, praying them to intercede in his behalf, that the term of his banishment might be abridged, and that he might be permitted to return to his family before he died.—All his applications were fruitless; those to whom he addressed himself had never interfered in his favour, for fear of giving offence to the obdurate Council, or had interfered in vain.

After languishing five years in exile, having lost all hope of return, through the interposition of his own family, or countrymen, in a fit of despair he addressed the Duke of Milan, putting him in mind of services which the Doge, his father, had rendered him, and begging that he would use his powerful influence with the State of Venice, that his sentence might be recalled. He entrusted his letter to a merchant, going from Canéa to Venice, who promised to take the first opportunity of sending it from thence to the Duke; instead of which, this wretch, as soon

as he arrived at Venice, delivered it to the chiefs of the Council of Ten.

This conduct of young Foscarei appeared criminal in the eyes of those judges; for, by the laws of the republic, all its subjects are expressly forbid claiming the protection of foreign Princes, in any thing which relates to the government of Venice.

Foscari was therefore ordered to be brought from Candia, and shut up in the State prison. There the chiefs of the Council of Ten ordered him once more to be put to the torture, to draw from him the motives which determined him to apply to the Duke of Milan. Such an exertion of the law is, indeed, the most flagrant injustice.

The miserable youth declared to the Council, that he had wrote the letter, in the full persuasion that the merchant, whose character he knew, would betray him, and deliver it to them; the consequence of which, he foresaw, would be, his being ordered back a prisoner to Venice, the only means he had in his power of seeing his parents and friends; a pleasure for which he had languished, with unsurmountable desire, for some time, and which he was willing to purchase at the expence of any danger or pain.

The Judges, little affected with this generous instance of filial piety, ordained, that the unhappy

young man should be carried back to Candia, and there be imprisoned for a year, and remain banished to that island for life; with this condition, that if he should make any more applications to foreign Powers, his imprisonment should be perpetual. At the same time they gave permission, that the Doge, and his lady, might visit their unfortunate son.

The Doge was, at this time, very old; he had been in possession of the office above thirty years. Those wretched parents had an interview with their son in one of the apartments of the palace; they embraced him with all the tenderness which his misfortunes, and his filial affection, deserved. The father exhorted him to bear his hard fate with firmness; the son protested, in the most moving terms, that this was not in his power; that however others could support the dismal loneliness of a prison, he could not; that his heart was formed for friendship, and the reciprocal endearments of social life; without which his soul sunk into dejection worse than death, from which alone he should look for relief, if he should again be confined to the horrors of a prison; and melting into tears, he sunk at his father's feet, imploring him to take compassion on a son who had ever loved him with the most dutiful affection, and who was perfectly innocent of the crime of which he was accused; he conjured him, by every bond of nature and religion, by the bowels of a father, and the mercy of a Redeemer, to

use his influence with the Council to mitigate their sentence, that he might be saved from the most cruel of all deaths, that of expiring under the slow tortures of a broken heart, in a horrible banishment from every creature he loved.—
“ My son,” replied the Doge, “ submit to the laws of your country, and do not ask of me what it is not in my power to obtain.”

Having made this effort, he retired to another apartment; and, unable to support any longer the acuteness of his feelings, he sunk into a state of insensibility, in which condition he remained till some time after his son had sailed on his return to Candia.

Nobody has presumed to describe the anguish of the wretched mother; those who are endowed with the most exquisite sensibility, and who have experienced distresses in some degree similar, will have the justest idea of what it was.

The accumulated misery of those unhappy parents touched the hearts of some of the most powerful senators, who applied with so much energy for a complete pardon for young Foscari, that they were on the point of obtaining it; when a vessel arrived from Candia, with tidings, that the miserable youth had expired in prison a short time after his return.

Some years after this, Nicholas Erizzo, a noble Venetian, being on his death-bed, confessed

that, bearing a violent resentment against the Senator Donato, he had committed the assassination for which the unhappy family of Foscarei had suffered so much.

At this time the sorrows of the Doge were at an end ; he had existed only a few months after the death of his son. His life had been prolonged, till he beheld his son persecuted to death for an infamous crime ; but not till he should see this foul stain washed from his family, and the innocence of his beloved son made manifest to the world.

The ways of heaven never appeared more dark and intricate, than in the incidents and catastrophe of this mournful story. To reconcile the permission of such events, to our ideas of infinite power and goodness, however difficult, is a natural attempt in the human mind, and has exercised the ingenuity of philosophers in all ages ; while, in the eyes of Christians, those seeming perplexities afford an additional proof, that there will be a future state, in which the ways of God to man will be fully justified.

L E T T E R X V .

Venice.

I Deferred giving you any account of the Council of Ten, till I came to mention the State Inquisitors, as the last was ingrafted on the former, and was merely intended to strengthen the hands, and augment the power of that court.

The Council of Ten consists, in effect, of seventeen members; for besides the ten noblemen chosen annually by the Grand Council, from whose number this court receives its name, the Doge presides, and the six Counsellors of the Seigniorie assist, when they think proper, at all deliberations.

This court was first instituted in the year 1310, immediately after Theipolo's conspiracy.

It is supreme in all State crimes. It is the duty of three chiefs, chosen every month from this court, by lot, to open all letters addressed to it; to report the contents, and assemble the members, when they think proper. They have

the power of seizing accused persons, examining them in prison, and taking their answers in writing, with the evidence against them; which being laid before the court, those chiefs appear as prosecutors.

The prisoners, all this time, are kept in close confinement, deprived of the company of relations and friends, and not allowed to receive any advice by letters. They can have no counsel to assist them, unless one of the Judges chooses to assume that office; in which case he is permitted to manage their defence, and plead their cause; after which the Court decide, by a majority of votes, acquitting the prisoner, or condemning him to private or public execution, as they think proper; and if any person murmur at the fate of their relations or friends, and talk of their innocence, and the injustice they have met with, these malcontents are in great danger of meeting with the same fate.

I am convinced you will think, that such a court was sufficiently powerful to answer every good purpose of government. This, it would appear, was not the opinion of the Grand Council of Venice; who thought proper, in the year 1501, to create the tribunal of State Inquisitors, which is still more despotic and brief in its manner of proceeding.

This court consists of three members, all taken from the Council of Ten; two literally from the Ten, and the third from the Counsellors of the Seigniori, who also make a part of that Council.

These three persons have the power of deciding, without appeal, on the lives of every citizen belonging to the Venetian State; the highest of the nobility, even the Doge himself, being not excepted. They keep the keys of the boxes into which anonymous informations are thrown. The informers who expect a recompence, cut off a little piece of their letter, which they afterwards shew to the Inquisitor when they claim a reward. To those three Inquisitors is given, the right of employing spies, considering secret intelligence, issuing orders to seize all persons whose words or actions they think reprehensible, and afterwards trying them when they think proper. If all the three are of opinion, no farther ceremony is necessary; they may order the prisoner to be strangled in prison, drowned in the Canal Orfano, hanged privately in the night-time, between the pillars, or executed publicly, as they please; and whatever their decision be, no farther inquisition can be made on the subject; but if any one of the three differs in opinion from his brethren, the cause must be carried before the full assembly of the Council of Ten. One would naturally imagine, that by those the prisoners would have a good

chance of being acquitted; because the difference in opinion of the three Inquisitors shews, that the case is, at least, dubious; and in dubious cases one would expect the leaning would be to the favourable side; but this court is governed by different maxims from those you are acquainted with. It is a rule here to admit of smaller presumptions in all crimes which affect the Government, than in other cases; and the only difference they make between a crime fully proved, and one more doubtful, is, that, in the first case, the execution is in broad day-light; whereas, when there are doubts of the prisoner's guilt, he is only put to death privately. The State Inquisitors have keys to every apartment of the Ducal palace, and can, when they think proper, penetrate into the very bed-chamber of the Doge, open his cabinet, and examine his papers. Of course they may command access to the house of every individual in the State. They continue in office only one year, but are not responsible afterwards for their conduct while they were in authority.

Can you think you would be perfectly composed, and easy in your mind, if you lived in the same city with three persons, who had the power of shutting you up in a dungeon, and putting you to death when they pleased, and without being accountable for so doing?

If, from the characters of the Inquisitors of one year, a man had nothing to dread, still he might fear that a set, of a different character, might be in authority the next; and although he were persuaded, that the Inquisitors would always be chosen from among men of the most known integrity in the State, he might tremble at the malice of informers, and secret enemies; a combination of whom might impose on the understandings of upright Judges, especially where the accused is excluded from his friends, and denied counsel to assist him in his defence; for, let him be ever so conscious of innocence, he cannot be sure of remaining unsuspected, or unaccused; nor can he be certain, that he shall not be put to the rack, to supply a deficiency of evidence: and finally, although a man were naturally possessed of so much firmness of character as to feel no inquietude from any of those considerations on his own account, he might still be under apprehensions for his children, and other connexions, for whom some men feel more anxiety than for themselves.

Such reflections naturally arise in the minds of those who have been born, and accustomed to live, in a free country, where no such despotic Tribunal is established; yet we find people apparently easy in the midst of all those dangers; nay, we know that mankind shew the same indifference in cities, where the Emperor, or the Bashaw, amuses himself, from time to

time, in cutting off the heads of those he happens to meet with in his walks; and I make no doubt, that if it were usual for the earth to open, and swallow a proportion of its inhabitants every day, mankind would behold this with as much coolness as at present they read the bills of mortality. Such is the effect of habit on the human mind, and so wonderfully does it accommodate itself to those evils for which there is no remedy.

But these considerations do not account for the Venetian nobles suffering such Tribunals as those of the Council of ten, or the State Inquirers, to exist, because these are evils which it unquestionably is in their power to remedy; and attempts have been made, at various times, by parties of the nobility, to remove them entirely, but without success; the majority of the Grand Council having, upon trial, been found for preserving these institutions.

It is believed to be owing to the attention of these courts, that the Venetian republic has lasted longer than any other; but in my opinion the chief object of a government should be, to render the people happy; and if it fails in that, the longer it lasts, so much the worse. If they are rendered miserable by that which is supposed to preserve the State, they cannot be losers by removing it, be the consequence what it may; and I fancy most people would rather live in a

convenient, comfortable house, which could stand only a few centuries, than in a gloomy gothic fabric, which would last to the day of judgment. These despotic courts, the State Inquisitors, and Council of Ten, have had their admirers, not only among the Venetian nobility, but among foreigners; even among such as have, on other occasions, professed principles very unfavourable to arbitrary power.

I find the following passage in a letter of Bishop Burnet, relating to Venice:

“ But this leads me to say a little to you of
“ that part of the constitution, which is so
“ censured by strangers, but is really both the
“ greatest glory, and the chief security, of this
“ republic; which is, the unlimited power of
“ the Inquisitors, that extends not only to the
“ chief of the nobility, but to the Duke him-
“ self; who is so subject to them, that they
“ may not only give him severe reprimands,
“ but search his papers, make his process, and,
“ in conclusion, put him to death, without
“ being bound to give any account of their
“ proceedings, except to the Council of Ten.
“ This is the dread, not only of all the sub-
“ jects, but of the whole nobility, and all
“ that bear office in the republic, and makes
“ the greatest amongst them tremble, and so
“ obliges them to an exact conduct.”

Now, for my part, I cannot help thinking, that a Tribunal which keeps the Doge, the nobility, and *all* the subjects, in dread, and makes the greatest among them tremble, can be no great blessing in any State. To be in continual fear, is certainly a very unhappy situation; and if the Doge, the nobility, and *all* the subjects, are rendered unhappy, I should imagine, with all submission, that the glory and security of the rest of the republic must be of very small importance.

In the same letter which I have quoted above, his Lordship, speaking of the State Inquisitors, has these words: "When they find any fault, they
" are so inexorable, and so quick as well as severe,
" in their justice, that the very fear of this is so
" effectual a restraint, that, perhaps, the only
" preservation of Venice, and of its liberty,
" is owing to this single piece of their constitution."

How would you, my good friend, relish that kind of liberty in England, which could not be preserved without the assistance of a despotic court? Such an idea of liberty might have been announced from the throne, as one of the mysteries of Government, by James the First, or the Second; but we are amazed to find it published by a counsellor, and admirer of William the Third. It may, indeed, be said, that the smallness of the Venetian State,

and its republican form of government, render it liable to be overturned by sudden tumults, or popular insurrections: this renders it the more necessary to keep a watchful eye over the conduct of individuals, and guard against every thing that may be the source of public commotion or disorder. The institution of State Inquisitors may be thought to admit of some apology in this view, like the extraordinary and irregular punishment of the Ostracism established at Athens, which had a similar foundation. In a large State, or in a less popular form of government, the same dangers from civil commotions cannot be apprehended; similar precautions for preventing them are therefore superfluous; but, notwithstanding every apology that can be made, I am at a loss to account for the existence of this terrible Tribunal for so long a time in the Venetian republic, because all ranks seem to have an interest in its destruction; and I do not see on what principle any one man, or any set of men, should wish for its preservation. It cannot be the Doge, for the State Inquisitors keep him in absolute bondage; nor would one naturally imagine that the nobles would relish this court, for the nobles are more exposed to the jealousy of the State Inquisitors than the citizens, or inferior people; and least of all ought the citizens to support a Tribunal, to which none of them can ever be admitted. As, however, the body of the nobility alone can remove this Tribunal from being part of

the constitution, and yet, we find, they have always supported it; we must conclude, that a junto of that body which has sufficient influence to command a majority of their brethren, has always retained the power in their own hands, and found means of having the majority at least of the Council of Ten, chosen from their own members; so that this arbitrary court is, perhaps, always composed, by a kind of rotation, of the individuals of a junto. But if the possibility of this is denied, because of the precaution used in the form of electing by ballot, the only other way I can account for a Tribunal of such a nature being permitted to exist, is, by supposing that a majority of the Venetian nobles have so great a relish for unlimited power, that, to have a chance of enjoying it for a short period, they are willing to bear all the miseries of slavery for the rest of their lives.

The encouragement given by this Government to anonymous accusers, and secret informations, is attended with consequences which greatly outweigh any benefit that can arise from them. They must destroy mutual confidence, and promote suspicions and jealousies among neighbours; and, while they render all ranks of men fearful, they encourage them to be malicious. The laws ought to be able to protect every man who openly and boldly accuses another.

If any set of men, in a State, are so powerful, that it is dangerous for an individual to charge them with their crimes openly, there must be a weakness in that government which requires a speedy remedy; but let not that be a remedy worse than the disease.

It is no proof of the boasted wisdom of this Government, that, in the use of the torture, it imitates many European States, whose judicial regulations it has avoided where they seem far less censurable. The practice of forcing confession, and procuring evidence by this means, always appeared to me a complication of cruelty and absurdity. To make a man suffer more than the pains of death, that you may discover whether he deserves death, or not, is a manner of distributing justice which I cannot reconcile to my idea of equity.

If it is the intention of the Legislature, that every crime shall be expiated by the sufferings of somebody, and is regardless whether this expiation is made by the agonies of an innocent person, or a guilty, then there is no more to be said; but, if the intention be to discover the truth, this horrid device of the torture will very often fail; for nineteen people out of twenty will declare whatever they imagine will soonest put an end to their sufferings, whether it be truth or falsehood.

LETTER XVI.

Venice.

ALthough many important events have happened since the establishment of the State Inquisition, which have greatly affected the power, riches, and extent of dominion of this republic, yet the nature of the Government has remained much the same. In what I have to add, therefore, I shall be very short and general.

I have already observed, that it was the usual policy of this republic to maintain a neutrality, as long as possible, in all the wars which took place among her neighbours; and when obliged, contrary to her inclinations, to declare for either party, she generally joined with that State whose distant situation rendered its power and prosperity the least dangerous of the two to Venice.

This republic seems, however, to have too much neglected to form defensive alliances with other States, and by the continual jealousy she shewed of them, joined to her immense riches, at last became the object of the hatred and

envy of all the Powers in Europe. This universal jealousy was roused, and brought into action, in the year 1508, by the intriguing genius of Pope Julius the Second. A confederacy was secretly entered into at Cambray, between Julius, the Emperor Maximilian, Lewis the Twelfth, and Ferdinand of Arragon, against the republic of Venice. A bare enumeration of the Powers which composed this league gives a very high idea of the importance of the State against which it was formed.

The Duke of Savoy, the Duke of Ferrara, and the Duke of Mantua, acceded to this confederacy, and gave in claims to part of the dominions of Venice. It was not difficult to form pretensions to the best part of the dominions of a State, which originally possessed nothing but a few marshy islands at the bottom of the Adriatic Gulph. It was the general opinion of Europe, that the league of Cambray would reduce Venice to her original possessions.

The Venetians, finding themselves deprived of all hopes of foreign assistance, sought support from their own courage, and resolved to meet the danger which threatened them, with the spirit of a brave and independent people.

Their General, Count Alviano, led an army against Lewis, who, being prepared before the

other confederates, had already entered Italy. However great the magnanimity of the Senate, and the skill of their General, the soldiery were by no means equal to the disciplined troops of France, led by a martial nobility, and headed by a gallant monarch. The army of Alviano was defeated; new enemies poured on the republic from all sides; and she lost, in one campaign, all the territories in Italy which she had been ages in acquiring.

Venice now found that she could no longer depend on her own strength and resources, and endeavoured to break, by policy, a combination which she had not force to resist. The Venetian Senate, knowing that Julius was the soul of the confederacy, offered to deliver up the towns he claimed, and made every other submission that could gratify the pride, and avert the anger, of that ambitious Pontiff; they also found means to separate Ferdinand from the alliance. Lewis and Maximilian being now their only enemies, the Venetians are able to sustain the war, till Julius, bearing no longer any resentment against the republic, and seized with remorse at beholding his native country ravaged by French and German armies, unites with Venice to drive the invaders out of Italy; and this republic is saved, with the loss of a small part of her Italian dominions, from a ruin which all Europe had considered as inevitable. The long and expensive

wars between the different Powers of Europe, in which this State was obliged to take part, prove that her strength and resources were not exhausted.

In the year 1570, the Venetians were forced into a ruinous war with the Ottoman Empire, at a time when the Senate, sensible of the great need they stood in of repose, had, with much address and policy, kept clear of the quarrels which agitated the rest of Europe. But Solyman the Second, upon the most frivolous pretext, demanded from them the island of Cyprus.

It was evident to all the world, that he had no better foundation for this claim, than a strong desire, supported by a sufficient power, of conquering the island. This kind of right might not be thought complete in a court of equity; but, in the jurisprudence of monarchs, it has always been found preferable to every other.

The Turks make a descent, with a great army, on Cyprus; they invest Famagousta, the capital; the garrison defends it with the most obstinate bravery; the Turks are repulsed in repeated assaults; many thousands of them are slain; but the ranks are constantly supplied by reinforcements. Antonio Bragadino, the commander, having displayed proofs of the highest

military skill, and the most heroic courage, his garrison being quite exhausted with fatigue, and greatly reduced in point of numbers, is obliged to capitulate.

The terms were, that the garrison should march out with their arms, baggage, and three pieces of cannon, and should be transported to Candia in Turkish vessels; that the citizens should not be pillaged, but allowed to retire with their effects.

Mustapha, the Turkish Bashaw, no sooner had possession of the place, than he delivered it up to be pillaged by the Janissaries; the garrison were put in chains, and made slaves on board the Turkish galleys. The principal officers were beheaded, and the gallant Bragadino was tied to a pillar, and, in the Bashaw's presence, flayed alive.

We meet with events in the annals of mankind, that make us doubt the truth of the most authentic history. We cannot believe that such actions have ever been committed by the inhabitants of this globe, and by creatures of the same species of ourselves. We are tempted to think we are perusing the records of hell, whose inhabitants, according to the most authentic accounts, derive a constant pleasure from the tortures of each other, as well as of all foreigners.

The conquest of the island of Cyprus is said to have cost the Turks fifty thousand lives. At this time, not Venice only, but all Christendom, had reason to dread the progress of the Turkish arms. The State of Venice solicited assistance from all the Catholic States; but France was, at that time, in alliance with the Turks; Maximilian dreaded their power; the Crown of Portugal was possessed by a child, and Poland was exhausted by her wars with Russia. The Venetians, on this pressing occasion, received assistance from Rome, whose power they had so often resisted, and from Spain, their late enemy.

Pope Pius the Fifth, and Philip the Second, joined their fleets with that of the republic. The confederate fleet assembled at Messina. The celebrated Don John of Austria, natural son to Charles the Fifth, was Generalissimo; Mark Antonio Colonna commanded the Pope's division, and Sebastian Veniero the Venetian. The Turkish fleet was greatly superior in the number of vessels.

The two fleets met in the Gulph of Lapanta: it is said, that the Turkish gallies were entirely worked by Christian slaves and the gallies of the Christians by Turkish; a shocking proof of the barbarous manner in which prisoners of war were treated in that age; and, in this instance, as absurd as it was barbarous; for a cartel for

an exchange of prisoners would have given freedom to the greater number of those unhappy men, without diminishing the strength of either navy. The fleets engage and the Turks are entirely defeated. Historians assert, that twenty thousand Turks were killed in the engagement, and one half of their fleet destroyed. This is a prodigious number to be killed on one side, and in a sea fight; it ought to be remembered, that there is no Turkish writer on the subject.

Pius the Fifth died soon after the battle of Lapanta. Upon his death the war languished on the side of the Allies; Philip became tired of the expence, and the Venetians were obliged to purchase a peace, by yielding the island of Cyprus to the Turks, and agreeing to pay them for three years, an annual tribute of one hundred thousand ducats. Those circumstances have no tendency to confirm the accounts which Christian writers have given, of the immense loss which the Turks met with at the battle of Lapanta.

In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the republic had a dispute with the Pope, which, in that age, was thought a matter of importance, and engaged the attention of all Christendom.

Paul the fifth shewed as eager a disposition as any of his predecessors, to extend the Papal authority. He had an inveterate prejudice against

the Venetian republic, on account of her having, on every occasion, resisted all ecclesiastical encroachments.

He sought, with impatience, an opportunity of manifesting his hatred, and expected that he should be assisted by the pious Princes of Europe, in bringing this refractory child of the church to reason. He began by demanding a sum of money, for the purpose of carrying on the war against the Turks in Hungary; he complained of certain decrees of the Senate, relating to the internal government of the republic, particularly one which forbade the building of any more new churches, without the permission of that assembly, and which, he said, smelt strongly of heresy; and above all, he exclaimed against the Council of Ten, for having imprisoned an Ecclesiastic, and prepared to bring him to a public trial. This reverend person, for whom his Holiness interested himself so warmly, was accused of having poisoned five people, one of whom was his own father. He was also accused of having caused another to be assassinated; and, to prevent a discovery, had afterwards poisoned the assassin.

The Senate refused the money, confirmed their decree against the building of churches, and applauded the conduct of the Council of Ten, in prosecuting the Ecclesiastic.

The authors of the age arranged themselves on the one side or the other, and this became a war of controverſy ; in which, though there was no blood ſhed, yet it appeared, by the writings of the partifans, that a conſiderable number of underſtandings were greatly injured. Thoſe who ſupported the Pope's cauſe inſiſted, that the temporal power of Princes is ſubordinate to his ; that he has a right to deprive them of their dominions, and releaſe their ſubjects from their oaths of fidelity, as often as this ſhall be for the glory of God, and for the good of the Church ; of which nobody could be ſo good a judge as the Pope, ſince all the world knew he was infallible ; that eccleſiaſtics were not ſubjected to the civil power ; that an eccleſiaſtical court, or the Pope, only, had authority over that body of men ; and nothing could be more abominable, than to continue a proſecution againſt a priſoner, whatever his crimes might be, after the Father of the church, who had the undoubted power of abſolving ſinners, had interferred in his favour.

The Senate, in their anſwers, acknowledged, that the Pope was ſupreme head of the Church, and that, in all ſubjects of religious belief, his power was unbounded ; for which reaſon they remained implicit and ſubmiſſive believers ; that they were far from diſputing the infallibility of his Holineſs in eccleſiaſtical matters, particularly within his own dominions ; but, with regard to the government of their ſubjects, they would

certainly take the whole trouble of that on themselves, and would administer as impartial justice to Ecclesiastics, as to those of other professions. They imagined also, that they were competent judges when, and for what purposes, they ought to levy money upon their own subjects, and whether it would be necessary to build any new churches in Venice, or not. Finally, they flattered themselves, that the prosecuting a murderer was no way inconsistent with the glory of God.

The greater number of the Princes of Christendom seemed to think the Senate were in the right. The Pope was disappointed in his expectations; and finding himself unsupported, was glad to shelter his pride under the mediation of Henry the fourth of France, who endeavoured to give his Holiness's defeat the appearance of victory.

LETTER XVII.

THE year 1618 is distinguished in the annals of Venice, by a conspiracy of a more formidable nature than any hitherto mentioned. The design of other conspiracies was a change in the form of government, or, at most, the destruction of some particular class of men in power; but the present plot had for its object the total annihilation of the Venetian republic. I speak of the conspiracy formed by the Marquis of Bedmar, ambassador from the Court of Spain, in conjunction with the Duke of Ossuno, and the Spanish governor of the Milanese.

The interesting manner in which this dark design has been described by the Abbé St. Real, has made it more universally known than any other part of the Venetian story. This writer is accused of having ornamented his account with some fanciful circumstances, an objection often enviously urged against some of the most agreeable writers, by authors whom nature has guarded from the possibility of committing such an error; men, whose truths are less interesting

than fictions, and whose fictions are as dull as the most insipid truths. Does any reader believe that the speeches of the Generals before a battle, as recorded by Livy, were actually pronounced in the terms of that author? Or, can any one wish they were expunged from his history? The Abbé St. Real has also put speeches into the mouths of the conspirators, and has embellished without materially altering, the real circumstances of the story. For my own part, I feel a degree of gratitude to every person who has entertained me; and while my passions are agreeably agitated with St. Real's lively history, I cannot bear that a phlegmatic fellow should interrupt my enjoyment; and, because of a few embellishments, declare, with an affected air of wisdom, that the whole is an idle romance.

The discovery of this plot, and the impressions of jealousy and terror which it left on the minds of the inhabitants of Venice, probably first suggested a plan of a more wicked nature than any of the conspiracies we have hitherto mentioned, and which was actually put in execution.

A set of villains combined together to accuse some of the nobility of treasonable practices, merely for the sake of the rewards bestowed upon informers. This horrid crime may be expected in all Governments where spies and informers are encouraged; it certainly occurs

frequently at Venice; sometimes, no doubt, without being detected, and sometimes it is detected, without being publicly punished, for fear of discouraging the business of information: but on the discovery of the present combination, all Venice was struck with such horror, that the Senate thought proper to publish every circumstance.

A certain number of those miscreants acted the part of accusers; the others, being seized by the information of their accomplices, appeared as witnesses.

A noble Venetian, of a respectable character, and advanced in years, of the name of Foscarini, fell a victim to this horrid cabal; and Venice beheld with astonishment and sorrow, one of her most respectable citizens accused, condemned, and executed as a traitor.

At length, accusations followed each other so close, that they created suspicions in the minds of the Judges. The informers themselves were seized, and examined separately, and the whole dreadful scheme became manifest. These wretches suffered the punishment due to such complicated villainy; the honour of Foscarini was re-instated, and every possible compensation made to his injured family. An instance like this, of the despotic precipitancy of the Inquisitors, more than counterbalances all the benefit

which the State ever receives from them, or the odious race of informers they encourage.

If the trial of the unfortunate Foscarini had been *open*, or *public*, and not in secret, according to the form of the Inquisitor's Court; and if he had been allowed to call exculpatory evidence, and assisted by those friends who knew all his actions, the falsehood and villany of these accusers would probably have been discovered, and his life saved.

In the year 1645, the Turks made an unexpected and sudden descent on the Island of Candia. The Senate of Venice did not display their usual vigilance on this occasion. They had seen the immense warlike preparations going forward, and yet allowed themselves to be amused by the Grand Seignior's declaring war against Malta, and pretending that the armament was intended against that island. The troops landed without opposition, and the town of Canéa was taken after an obstinate defence.

This news being brought to Venice, excited an universal indignation against the Turks; and the Senate resolved to defend, to the utmost, this valuable part of the empire. Extraordinary ways and means of raising money were fallen upon; among others, it was proposed to sell the rank of nobility. Four citizens offered one hundred thousand ducats each for this honour;

and, notwithstanding some opposition, this measure was at last carried. Eighty families were admitted into the Grand Council, and to the honour and privileges of the nobility. What an idea does this give of the wealth of the inhabitants of Venice?

The siege of Candia, the capital of the island of that name, is, in some respects, more memorable than that of any town which history, or even which poetry, has recorded. It lasted twenty-four years. The amazing efforts made by the republic of Venice astonished all Europe; their courage interested the gallant spirits of every nation: volunteers from every country came to Candia, to exercise their valour, to acquire knowledge in the military art, and assist a brave people whom they admired. The Duke of Beaufort, so much the darling of the Parisian populace during the war of the Fronde, was killed here, with many more gallant French officers.

During this famous siege, the Venetians gained many important victories over the Turkish fleets. Sometimes they were driven from the walls of Candia, and the Turkish garrison of Canéa was even besieged by the Venetian fleets. The slaughter made of the Turkish armies is without example; but new armies were soon found to supply their place, by a Government

which boasts such populous dominions, and which has despotic authority over its subjects.

Mahomet the Fourth, impatient at the length of this siege, came to Negropont, that he might have more frequent opportunities of hearing from the Vizier, who carried on the siege. An officer sent with dispatches, was directed by the Vizier, to explain to Mahomet the manner in which he made his approaches, and to assure him that he would take all possible care to save the lives of the soldiers. The humane Emperor answered, That he had sent the Vizier to take the place, and not to spare the lives of soldiers; and he was on the point of ordering the head of the officer who brought this message, to be cut off, merely to quicken the Vizier in his operations, and to shew him how little he valued the lives of men.

In spite of the Vizier's boasted parsimony, this war is said to have cost the lives of two hundred thousand Turks. Candia capitulated in the year 1668: the conditions on this occasion were honourably fulfilled. Morfini, the Venetian General, after displaying prodigies of valour and capacity, marched out of the rubbish of this well-disputed city, with the honours of war.

The expence of such a tedious war greatly exhausted the resources of Venice, which could

not now repair them so quickly as formerly, when she enjoyed the rich monopoly of the Asiatic trade; the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope having long since opened that valuable commerce to the Portuguese and other nations.

This republic remained in a state of tranquillity, endeavouring, by the arts of peace, and cultivation of that share of commerce which she still retained, to fill her empty exchequer, till she was drawn into a new war, in the year 1683, by the insolence of the Ottoman Court. The Venetians had for some time endeavoured, by negociation, and many conciliatory representations, to accommodate matters with the Turks; and though the haughty conduct of her enemies afforded small hopes of success, yet such was her aversion to war on the present occasion, that she still balanced, whether to bear those insults, or repel them by arms; when she was brought to decision by an event which gave the greatest joy to Venice, and astonished all Europe. This was the great victory gained over the Turkish army before the walls of Vienna, by Sobieski, King of Poland.

In this new war, their late General Mörfini again had the command of the fleets and armies of the republic, and sustained the great reputation he had acquired in Candia. He conquered the Morea, which was ceded formally to

Venice, with some other acquisitions, at the peace of Carlowitz, in the last year of the last century.

During the war of the succession, the State of Venice observed a strict neutrality. They considered that dispute as unconnected with their interests, taking care, however, to keep on foot an army on their frontiers in Italy, of sufficient force to make them respected by the contending Powers. But, soon after the peace of Utrecht, the Venetians were again attacked by their old enemies the Turks; who, beholding the great European Powers exhausted by their late efforts, and unable to assist the republic, thought this the favourable moment for recovering the Morea, which had been so lately ravished from them. The Turks obtained their object, and at the peace of Passarowitz, which terminated this unsuccessful war, the Venetian State yielded up the Morea; the Grand Seignior, on his part, restoring to them the small islands of Cerigo and Cerigotto, with some places which his troops had taken during the course of the war in Dalmatia. Those, with the islands of Corfu, Santa Maura, Zante, Cephalonia, the remains of their dominions in the Levant, they have since fortified, at a great expence, as their only barriers against the Turk.

Since this period no essential alteration has taken place in the Venetian government, nor

has there been any essential increase, or diminution, in the extent of their dominions. They have little to fear at present from the Turks, whose attention is sufficiently occupied by a more formidable enemy than the republic and the House of Austria united. Besides, if the Turks were more disengaged, as they have now stripped the republic of Cyprus, Candia, and their possessions in Greece, what remains in the Levant is hardly worth their attention.

The declension of Venice did not, like that of Rome, proceed from the increase of luxury, or the revolt of their own armies in the distant Colonies, or from civil wars of any kind. Venice has dwindled in power and importance, from causes which could not be foreseen, or guarded against by human prudence, although they had been foreseen. How could this republic have prevented the discovery of a passage to Asia by the Cape of Good Hope? or hinder other nations from being inspired with a spirit of enterprise, industry, and commerce? In their present situation there is little probability of their attempting new conquests; happy if they are allowed to remain in the quiet possession of what they have. Venice has a most formidable neighbour in the Emperor, whose dominions border on those of this republic on all sides. The independency of the republic entirely depends on his moderation; or, in case he

should lose that virtue, on the protection of the great Powers of Europe.

I have now finished the sketch I proposed, of the Venetian government, with which I could not help intermingling many of the principal historical events; indeed I enlarged on these, after you informed me, that you intended to give your young friend copies of my letters on this subject, before he begins his tour. I wish they were more perfect on his account; they will, at least, prevent his being in the situation of some travellers I have met with, who, after remaining here many months, knew no more of the ancient or modern state of Venice, than that the inhabitants went about in boats instead of coaches, and, generally speaking, wore masks.

L E T T E R XVIII.

Venice.

HAVING travelled with you through the splendid æras of the Venetian story, and presented their statesmen and heroes to your view, let us now return to the present race, in whose life and conversation, I forewarn you, there is nothing heroic. The truth is, that in every country as well as Venice, we can only *read* of heroes; they are seldom to be *seen*; for this plain reason, that while they are to be seen we do not think them heroes. The historian dwells upon what is vast and extraordinary; what is common and trivial finds no place in his records. When we hear the names of Epaminondas, Themistocles, Camillus, Scipio, and other great men of Greece and Rome, we think of their great actions, we know nothing else about them;—but when we see the worthies of our own times, we unfortunately recollect their whole history. The citizens of Athens and Rome, who lived in the days of the heroes above mentioned, very probably had not the same admiration of them that we have; and our posterity, some

eight or ten centuries hence, will, it is to be hoped, have a higher veneration for the great men of the present age, than their intimate acquaintance are known to have, or than those can be supposed to form, who daily behold them lounging in gaming-houses. All this, you perceive, is little more than a commentary on the old observation, That no man is a hero to his Valet de Chambre. The number of playhouses in Venice is very extraordinary, considering the size of the town, which is not thought to contain above one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, yet there are eight or nine theatres here, including the opera-houses. You pay a trifle at the door for admittance; this entitles you to go into the pit, where you may look about, and determine what part of the house you will sit in. There are rows of chairs placed in the front of the pit, next the orchestra; the seats of these chairs are folded to their backs, and fastened by a lock. Those who choose to take them pay a little more money to the door-keeper, who immediately unlocks the seat. Very decent-looking people occupy these chairs; but the back part of the pit is filled with footmen and gondoleers, in their common working clothes. The nobility and better sort of citizens, have boxes retained for the year; but there are always a sufficient number to be let to strangers; the price of those varies every night, according to the season of the year, and the piece acted.

A Venetian playhouse has a dismal appearance in the eyes of people accustomed to the brilliancy of those of London. Many of the boxes are so dark, that the faces of the company in them can hardly be distinguished at a little distance, even when they do not wear masks. The stage, however, is well illuminated, so that the people in the boxes can see perfectly well, every thing that is transacted there; and when they choose to be seen themselves, they order lights into their boxes. Between the acts you sometimes see ladies walking about, with their Cavalieri Serventés, in the back part of the pit, when it is not crowded. As they are masked, they do not scruple to reconnoitre the company, with their spying-glasses, from this place: when the play begins, they return to their boxes. This continual moving about from box to box, and between the boxes and the pit, must create some confusion, and, no doubt, is disagreeable to those who attend merely on account of the piece. There must, however, be found some *douceur* in the midst of all this obscurity and confusion, which, in the opinion of the majority of the audience, overbalances these obvious inconveniences.

The music of the opera here is reckoned as fine as in any town in Italy; and, at any rate, is far superior to the praise of so very poor a judge as I am. The dramatic and poetical parts of those pieces are little regarded: the poet is

allowed to indulge himself in as many anachronisms, and other inconsistencies, as he pleases. Provided the music receives the approbation of the critic's ear, his judgment is not offended with any absurdities in the other parts of the composition. The celebrated Metastasio has disdained to avail himself of this indulgence in his operas, which are fine dramatic compositions. He has preserved the alliance which ought always to subsist between sense and music.

But as for the music of the serious operas, it is, in general, infinitely too fine for my ear; to my shame I must confess, that it requires a considerable effort for me to sit till the end.

It is surely happy for a man to have a real sensibility for fine music; because he has, by that means, one source of enjoyment more, than those whose auditory nerves are less delicately strung. It is, however, equally absurd and silly to affect an extensive delight in things which nature has not framed us to enjoy; yet how many of our acquaintance, accused of this folly, have we seen doing painful penance at the Hay-market; and, in the midst of unsuppressible yawnings, calling out, Charming! exquisite! bravissimo! &c.

It is amazing what pains some people take to render themselves ridiculous; and it is a matter of real curiosity to observe, in what various

shapes the little despicable spirit of affectation shews itself among mankind.

I remember a very honest gentleman, who understood little or nothing of French ; but having picked up a few phrases, he brought them forward on every occasion, and affected, among his neighbours in the country, the most perfect knowledge, and highest admiration, of that language. When any body, in compliance with his taste, uttered a sentence in that tongue, though my good friend did not understand a syllable of it, yet he never failed to nod and smile to the speaker with the most knowing air imaginable. The parson of the parish, at a country dinner, once addressed him in these emphatic words: *Monsieur, je trouve ce plum-pudding extrêmement bon !* which happening not to be in my friend's collection of phrases, he did not comprehend. He nodded and smiled to the clergyman, however, in his usual intelligent manner ; but a person who sat near him, being struck with the sagacious and important tone in which the observation had been delivered, begged of my friend to explain it in English ;—on which, after some hesitation, he declared, that the turn of the expression was so genteel, and so exquisitely adapted to the French idiom, that it could not be rendered into English, without losing a great deal of the original beauty of the sentiment.

At the comic opera I have sometimes seen action alone excite the highest applause, independent of either the poetry or the music. I saw a Duo performed by an old man and a young woman supposed to be his daughter, in such an humorous manner as drew an universal *encora* from the spectators. The merit of the musical part of the composition, I was told, was but very moderate, and as for the sentiment you shall judge.

The father informs his daughter, in a song, that he has found an excellent match for her; who, besides being rich, and very prudent, and not too young, was over and above a particular friend of his own, and in person and disposition, much such a man as himself; he concludes, by telling her, that the ceremony will be performed next day. She thanks him, in the gayest air possible, for his obliging intentions, adding, that she should have been glad to have shewn her implicit obedience to his commands, provided there had been any chance of the man's being to her taste; but as, from the account he had given, there could be none, she declares she will not marry him next day, and adds, with a *very long* quaver, that if she were to live to *eternity* she should continue of the same opinion. The father, in a violent rage, tells her, that instead of to-morrow, the marriage should take place that very day; to which she replies, Non: he rejoins Si; she, Non, non; he, Si, si; the daughter,

Non, non, non; the Father, Si, fi, fi; and so the singing continues for five or six minutes. You perceive there is nothing marvellously witty in this; and for the daughter to be of a different opinion from her father, in the choice of a husband, is not a very new dramatic incident. Well, I told you the Duo was encored—they immediately performed it a second time, and with more humour than the first. The whole house vociferated for it again; and it was sung a third time in a manner equally pleasant, and yet perfectly different from any of the former two.

I thought the house would have been brought down about our ears, so extravagant were the testimonies of approbation.

The two actors were obliged to appear again, and sung this Duo a fourth time; which they executed in a style so new, so natural, and so exquisitely droll, that the audience now thought there had been something deficient in their former performances, and that they had hit on the true comic only this last time.

Some people began to call for it again; but the old man, now quite exhausted, begged for mercy; on which the point was given up. I never before had any idea that such strong comic powers could have been displayed in the singing of a song.

The dancing is an essential part of the entertainment at the opera here, as well as in London. There is certainly a much greater proportion of mankind deaf to the delights of music, than blind to the beauties of fine dancing. During the singing, and recitativo part of the performance, the singers are often allowed to warble for a considerable time, without any body's minding them; but the moment the ballet begins, private conversation, though pretty universal before, is immediately at an end, and the eyes of all the spectators are fixed on the stage. This, to be sure, has been always the case in London, and, in spite of the pains some people take to conceal it, we all know the reason; but I own I did not expect to find the same preference of dancing to music in Italy.

After seeing the dancing at the French opera, and coming so lately to Vienna, where we had seen some of Noverre's charming ballets very well executed, we could have no high admiration of those performed here, though there are at present some dancers highly esteemed, who perform every night.

The Italians, I am informed, have a greater relish for agility and high jumping in their dancers, than for graceful movements.

It is extraordinary that they do not vary the ballets oftner. They give the same every night

during the run of the opera. There is a propriety in continuing the same opera for a considerable time ; because music is often better relished after it becomes a little familiar to the ear, than at first ; but a ballet might be changed, without much difficulty, every night.

L E T T E R XIX.

Venice.

MANY people are surpris'd, that, in a Government so very jealous of its power as that of Venice, there is no military establishment within the city to support the executive power, and repress any popular commotion. For my own part, I am strongly of opinion, that it proceeds from this very jealousy in government, that there is no military garrison here.

An arbitrary Prince is fond of a standing army, and loves to be always surrounded by guards; because he, being the permanent fountain of honours and promotion, the army will naturally be much attached to him, and become, on all occasions, the blind instruments of his pleasure; but at Venice, there is no visible permanent object, to which the army can attach itself. The Doge would not be allowed the command of the garrison, if there was one. The three State Inquisitors are continually changing;

and before one set could gain the affections of the soldiers, another would be chosen; so that Government could not be supported, but much more probably would be overturned, by a numerous garrison being established in Venice; for it might perhaps not be difficult for a few of the rich and powerful nobles to corrupt the garrison, and gain over the commander to any ambitious plan of their own, for the destruction of the constitution.

But although there is no formal garrison in a military uniform, yet there is a real effective force sufficient to suppress any popular commotion, at the command of the Senate and Council of Ten. This force, besides the Sbirri, consists of a great number of stout fellows, who, without any distinguishing dress, are kept in the pay of Government, and are at the command of that Council. There is also the whole body of the gondoliers, the most hardy and daring of the common Venetians. This body of men are greatly attached to the nobility, from whom they have most of their employment, and with whom they acquire a certain degree of familiarity, by passing great part of their time, shut up in boats, in their company, and by being privy to many of their love intrigues. Great numbers of these gondoliers are in the service of particular nobles; and there is no doubt, that, in case of any popular insurrection, the whole would take the side

of the nobility and Senate, against the people. In short, they may be considered as a kind of standing militia, ready to rise as soon as the Government requires their services.

Lastly, there is the Grand Council itself, which, in case of any violent commotion of the citizens and populace, could be armed directly, from the small arsenal within the Ducal palace, and would prove a very formidable force against an unarmed multitude; for the laws of Venice forbid, under pain of death, any citizen to carry fire-arms; a law which is very exactly executed by the State Inquisitors.

By those means the executive power of Government is as irresistible at Venice, as at Peterburgh or Constantinople, while there is a far less chance of the Government itself being overthrown here by the instruments of its own power; for, although a regular army, or garrison, might be corrupted by the address of an ambitious Doge, or by a combination of a few rich and popular nobles, in which case a revolution would take place at once; it is almost impossible to conceive, that all the different powers above mentioned could be engaged to act in favour of one man, or a small combination of men, without being detected by the vigilance of the Inquisitors, or the jealousy of those who were not in

the conspiracy. And if we suppose a majority of the nobles inclinable to any change in the form of the Government, they have no occasion to carry on a secret plot; they may come to the Council Chamber, and dictate whatever alterations they think proper.

L E T T E R XX.

Venice.

THERE is unquestionably much reflection, and great depth of thought, displayed in the formation of the political constitution of Venice; but I should admire it much more, if the Council of Ten, and State Inquisitors, had never formed any part of it. Their institution, in my opinion, destroys the effect of all the rest. Like those misers who actually starve themselves, by endeavouring to avoid the inconveniences of poverty, the Venetians, in whatever manner it is brought about, actually support a despotic tribunal, under the pretext of keeping out despotism. In some respects this system is worse than the fixed and permanent tyranny of one person; for that person's character and maxims would be known, and, by endeavouring to conform themselves to his way of thinking, people might have some chance of living unmolested; but according to this plan, they have a free-thinker for their tyrant to-day, and a bigot to-morrow. One year a set of Inquisitors, who consider certain parts of conduct as innocent, which, in the sight

of their successors, may appear State crimes; men do not know what they have to depend upon. An universal jealousy must prevail, and precautions will be used to avoid the suspicions of Government, unknown in any other country. Accordingly we find, that the noble Venetians are afraid of having any intercourse with foreign ambassadors, or with foreigners of any kind; they are even cautious of visiting at each other's houses, and hardly ever have meetings together, except at the courts, or on the Broglio. The boasted secrecy of their public councils proceeds, in all probability, from the same principle of fear. If all conversation on public affairs were forbid, under pain of death, and if the members of the British Parliament were liable to be seized in the night-time by general warrants, and hanged at Tyburn, or drowned in the Thames, at the pleasure of the Secretaries of State, I dare swear the world would know as little of what passes in either House of Parliament, as they do of what is transacted in the Senate of Venice.

It is not safe for a noble Venetian to acquire, in a high degree, the love and confidence of the common people. This excites the jealousy of the Inquisitors, and proves a pretty certain means of excluding him from any of the high offices. A Government which displays so much distrust and suspicion where there is little or

no ground, will not fail to shew marks of the same disposition where, in the general opinion, there is some reason to be circumspect. Ecclesiastics, of every denomination, are excluded, by the constitution of Venice, from a place in the Senate, or holding any civil office whatever; nor is it permitted them, directly or indirectly, to intermeddle in State affairs. In many instances, they are deprived of that kind of influence which, even in Protestant countries, is allowed to the clergy. The Patriarch of Venice has not the disposal of the offices belonging to St. Mark's church: all the Deans are named by the Doge and Senate.

Though it is forbid to the nobility, and to the clergy, to hold any conversation with strangers upon politics, or affairs of State; yet it is remarked, the gondoleers are exceeding ready to talk upon these, or any other subjects, with all who give them the smallest encouragement. Those who are not in the immediate service of any particular nobleman, are often retained by Government, like the Valets de-place at Paris, as spies upon strangers. It is said, that while those fellows row their gondolas, in seeming inattention to the conversation, they are taking notice of every thing which is said, that they may report it to their employers, when they imagine it any way concerns the Government. If this is true, those are to be pitied who are obliged to listen to all the stuff that such

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politicians may be supposed to relate. As soon as a stranger arrives, the gondoleers who brought him to Venice immediately repair to a certain office, and give information where they took him up, to what house they conducted him, and of any other particulars they may have picked up. All those precautions recalled to my memory the garrison of Darmstadt, of which I gave you an account in a letter from that place, where the strictest duty is kept up by day and night, in winter as well as summer, and every precaution used, as if an enemy were at the gates; though no mortal has the smallest design against the place, and though it is perfectly understood by all the inhabitants, that if an army was in reality to come with hostile intentions, the town could not hold out a week. In the same manner, I cannot help thinking, that all this jealousy and distrust, those numerous engines set a going, and all this complicated system for the discovery of plots, and the defence of the constitution of this republic, serves only to harass their own subjects. Their constitution is certainly in no such danger as to require such an apparatus of machines to defend it, unless, indeed, the Emperor were to form a plot against it; and, in that case, it is much to be feared, that the spies, gondoleers, lion mouths, and State Inquisitors, would hardly prevent its success.

Exclusive of this State Inquisition, my abhorrence to which, I perceive, leads me sometimes away from my purpose, all ranks of people here might be exceeding happy. The business of the various courts, and the great number of offices in the State, form a constant employment for the nobles, and furnish them with proper objects to excite industry and ambition. The citizens form a respectable body in the State; and, though they are excluded from the Senate, they may hold some very lucrative and important offices. By applying to the arts and sciences, which are encouraged at Venice, they have a fair chance of living agreeably, and laying up a competency for their families. Private property is no where better secured than at Venice; and notwithstanding she no longer enjoys the trade of Asia without competitors, yet her commerce is still considerable, and many individuals acquire great wealth by trade. The manufactories established here employ all the industrious poor, and prevent that squalid beggary, that pilfering and robbery, one or other, or all of which, prevail in most other countries of Europe.

Their subjects on the Terra Firma, I am informed, are not at all oppressed; the Senate has found that mild treatment, and good usage, are the best policy, and more effectual than armies, in preventing revolts. The Podestàs, therefore, are not allowed to abuse their power, by treating

the people with severity or injustice. Those Governors know, that any complaints produced against them, will be scrutinized by the Senate very carefully. This prevents many abuses of power on their part, and makes the neighbouring provinces which formerly belonged to this State, regret the chance of war which ravished them from the equitable government of their ancient masters.

L E T T E R XXI.

Venice.

THOUGH the Venetian Government is still under the influence of jealousy, that gloomy Dæmon is now entirely banished from the bosoms of individuals. Instead of the confinement in which women were formerly kept at Venice, they now enjoy a degree of freedom unknown even at Paris. Of the two extremes, the present, without doubt, is the preferable.

The husbands seem at last convinced, that the chastity of their wives is safest under their own guardianship, and that when a woman thinks her honour not worth her own regard, it is still more unworthy of his. This advantage, with many others, must arise from the present system; that when a husband believes that his wife has faithfully adhered to her conjugal engagement, he has the additional satisfaction of knowing, that she acts from a love to him, or some honourable motive; whereas, formerly, a Venetian husband could not be certain that he

was not obliged, for his wife's chastity, to iron bars, bolts, and padlocks.

Could any man imagine, that a woman, whose chastity was preserved by such means only, was, in fact, more respectable than a common prostitute? The old plan of distrust and confinement, without even securing what was its object, must have had a strong tendency to debase the minds of both the husband and the wife; for what man, whose mind was not perfectly abject, could have pleasure in the society of a wife, who, to his own conviction, languished to be in the arms of another man? Of all the humble employments that ever the wretched sons of Adam submitted to, surely that of watching a wife from morning to night, and all night too, is the most perfectly humiliating. Such ungenerous distrust must also have had the worst effect on the minds of the women; made them view their jailors with disgust and horror; and we ought not to be much surprised if some preferred the common gondoleers of the lakes, and the vagrants of the streets, to such husbands. Along with jealousy, *poison* and the *filetto* have been banished from Venetian gallantry, and the innocent mask is substituted in their places. According to the best information I have received, this same mask is a much more innocent matter than is generally imagined. In general it is not intended to conceal the person who wears it, but only used as

an apology for his not being in full dress. With a mask stuck in the hat, and a kind of black mantle, trimmed with lace of the same colour, over the shoulders, a man is sufficiently dressed for an assembly at Venice.

Those who walk the streets, or go to the play-houses with masks actually covering their faces, are either engaged in some love intrigue, or would have the spectators think so; for this is a piece of affectation which prevails here, as well as elsewhere; and I have been assured, by those who have resided many years at Venice, that *refined* gentlemen, who are fond of the reputation, though they shrink from the catastrophe of an intrigue, are no uncommon characters here; and I believe it the more readily, because I daily see many feeble gentlemen tottering about in masks, for whom a basin of warm restorative soup seems more expedient than the most beautiful woman in Venice.

One evening at St. Mark's Place, when a gentleman of my acquaintance was giving an account of this curious piece of affectation, he desired me to take notice of a Venetian nobleman of his acquaintance, who, with an air of mystery, was conducting a female mask into his Cassino. My acquaintance knew him perfectly well, and assured me, he was the most innocent creature with women he had ever been acquainted with. When this gallant person perceived that

we were looking at him, his mask fell to the ground, as if by accident; and after we had got a complete view of his countenance, he put it on with much hurry, and immediately rushed, with his partner, into the Cassino.

Fugit ad falices, sed se cupit ante videri.

— to the woods the wanton hies,
And wishes to be seen before she flies.

DRYDEN

You have heard, no doubt, of those little apartments, near St. Mark's Place, called Cassinos. They have the misfortune to labour under a very bad reputation; they are accused of being temples entirely consecrated to lawless love, and a thousand scandalous tales are told to strangers concerning them. Those tales are certainly not believed by the Venetians themselves, the proof of which is, that the Cassinos are allowed to exist; for I hold it perfectly absurd to imagine, that men would suffer their wives to enter such places, if they were not convinced that those stories were ill-founded; nor can I believe, after all we have heard of the profligacy of Venetian manners, that women, even of indifferent reputations, would attend Cassinos in the open manner they do, if it were understood that more

liberties were taken with them there than elsewhere.

The opening before St. Mark's church is the only place in Venice where a great number of people can assemble. It is the fashion to walk here a great part of the evening, to enjoy the music, and other amusements; and although there are coffee-houses, and Venetian manners permit ladies, as well as gentlemen, to frequent them, yet it is natural for the noble and most wealthy to prefer little apartments of their own, where, without being exposed to intrusion, they may entertain a few friends in a more easy and unceremonious manner than they could do at their palaces. Instead of going home to a formal supper, and returning afterwards to this place of amusement, they order coffee, lemonade, fruit, and other refreshments, to the Cassino.

That those little apartments may be occasionally used for the purposes of intrigue, is not improbable; but that this is the ordinary and avowed purpose for which they are frequented is, of all things, the least credible.

Some writers who have described the manners of the Venetians, as more profligate than those of other nations, assert at the same time, that the Government encourages this profligacy, to relax and dissipate the minds of the people, and

prevent their planning, or attempting, any thing against the constitution. Were this the case it could not be denied, that the Venetian legislators display their patriotism in a very extraordinary manner, and have fallen upon as extraordinary means of rendering their people good subjects. They first erect a despotic court to guard the public liberty, and next they corrupt the morals of the people, to keep them from plotting against the State. This last piece of refinement, however, is no more than a conjecture of some theoretical politicians, who are apt to take facts for granted, without sufficient proof, and afterwards display their ingenuity in accounting for them. That the Venetians are more given to sensual pleasures than the inhabitants of London, Paris, or Berlin, I imagine will be difficult to prove; but as the State inquisitors do not think proper, and the ecclesiastical are not allowed, to interfere in affairs of gallantry; as a great number of strangers assemble twice or thrice a year at Venice, merely for the sake of amusement; and above all, as it is the custom to go about in masks, an idea prevails, that the manners are more licentious here than elsewhere. I have had occasion to observe, that this custom of wearing a mask, by conveying the ideas of concealment and intrigues, has contributed greatly to give some people an impression of Venetian profligacy. But, for my own part,

it is not a piece of white or black paper, with distorted features, that I suspect, having often found the most complete worthlessness concealed under a smooth smiling piece of human skin.

LETTER XXII.

Venice.

I AM very sensible, that it requires a longer residence at Venice, and better opportunities than I have had, to enable me to give a character of the Venetians. But were I to form an idea of them from what I have seen, I should paint them as a lively ingenious people, extravagantly fond of public amusements, with an uncommon relish for humour, and yet more attached to the real enjoyments of life, than to those who depend on ostentation, and proceed from vanity.

The common people of Venice display some qualities very rarely to be found in that sphere of life, being remarkably sober, obliging to strangers, and gentle in their intercourse with each other. The Venetians in general are tall and well made. Though equally robust, they are not so corpulent as the Germans. The latter also are of fair complexions, with light grey or blue eyes; whereas the Venetians are for the most part of a ruddy brown colour, with dark eyes. You meet in the streets of Venice

many fine manly countenances, resembling those transmitted to us by the pencils of Paul Veronese and Titian. The women are of a fine stile of countenance, with expressive features, and a skin of a rich carnation. They dress their hair in a fanciful manner, which becomes them very much. They are of an easy address, and have no aversion to cultivating an acquaintance with those strangers, who are presented to them by their relations, or have been properly recommended.

Strangers are under less restraint here, in many particulars, than the native inhabitants. I have known some, who, after having tried most of the capitals of Europe, have preferred to live at Venice, on account of the variety of amusements, the gentle manners of the inhabitants, and the perfect freedom allowed in every thing, except in blaming the measures of Government. I have already mentioned in what manner the Venetians are in danger of being treated who give themselves that liberty. When a stranger is so imprudent as to declaim against the form or the measures of Government, he will either receive a message to leave the territories of the State, or one of the Sbirri will be sent to accompany him to the Pope's or the Emperor's dominions.

The houses are thought inconvenient by many of the English; they are better calculated, however, for the climate of Italy, than if they

were built according to the London model, which, I suppose, is the plan those critics approve. The floors are of a kind of red plaister, with a brilliant glossy surface, much more beautiful than wood, and far preferable in case of fire, whose progress they are calculated to check.

The principal apartments are on the second floor. The Venetians seldom inhabit the first, which is often intirely filled with lumber; perhaps, they prefer the second, because it is farthest from the moisture of the lakes; or perhaps they prefer it, because it is better lighted, and more cheerful; or they may have some better reason for this preference than I am acquainted with, or can imagine. Though the inhabitants of Great Britain make use of the first floors for their chief apartments, this does not form a complete demonstration that the Venetians are in the wrong for preferring the second. When an acute sensible people universally follow one custom, in a mere matter of conveniency, however absurd that custom may appear in the eyes of a stranger at first sight, it will generally be found, that there is some real advantage in it, which compensates all the apparent inconveniencies. Of this travellers, who do not hurry with too much rapidity through the countries they visit, are very sensible: for, after having had time to weigh every circumstance, they often see reason to approve

what they had formerly condemned. I could illustrate this by many examples; but your own recollection must furnish you with so many, that any more would be superfluous. Custom and fashion have the greatest influence on our taste of beauty or excellence of every kind. What, from a variety of causes, has become the standard in one country, is sometimes just the contrary in another. The same thing that makes a low-brimmed hat appear genteel at one time, and ridiculous at another, has made a different species of versification be accounted the model of perfection in old Rome and modern Italy, at Paris, or at London. In matters of taste, particularly in dramatic poetry, the prejudices which each particular nation acquires in favour of its own is difficult to be removed. People seldom obtain such a perfect knowledge of foreign language and foreign manners, as to understand all the niceties of the one and the allusions to the other: of consequence, many things are insipid to them, for which a native may have a high relish.

The dialogues in rhyme of the French plays appear unnatural and absurd to Englishmen when they first attend the French theatre; yet those who have remained long in France, and acquired a more perfect knowledge of the language, assure us, that without rhyme the dignity of the Tragic Muse cannot be supported; and that, even in Comedy, they produce an additional elegance which overbalances every

objection. The French language being more studied and better understood by the English than our language is by the French nation, we find many of our countrymen who relish the beauties, and pay the just tribute of admiration to the genius of Corneille, while there is scarcely a single Frenchman to be found who has any idea of the merit of Shakespeare.

Without being justly accused of partiality, I may assert that, in this instance the English display a fairness and liberality of sentiment superior to the French. The irregularities of Shakespeare's drama are obvious to every eye, and would, in the present age, be avoided by a poet not possessed of a hundredth part of his genius. His peculiar beauties, on the other hand, are of an excellence which has not, perhaps, been attained by any poet of any age or country; yet the French critics, from Voltaire down to the poorest scribbler in the literary journals, all stop at the former, declaim on the barbarous taste of the English nation, insist on the grotesque absurdity of the poet's imagination, and illustrate both by partial extracts of the most exceptionable scenes of Shakespeare's plays.

When a whole people, with that degree of judgment which even the enemies of the British nation allow them to have, unite in the highest admiration of one man, and continue, for ages,

to behold his pieces with unfated delight, it might occur to those Frenchmen, that there possibly was some excellence in the works of this poet, though they could not see it; and a very moderate share of candour might have taught them, that it would be more becoming to spare their ridicule, till they acquired a little more knowledge of the author against whom it is pointed.

An incident which occurred since my arrival at Venice, though founded on a prejudice much more excusable than the conduct of the critics above mentioned, has brought home to my conviction the rashness of those who form opinions, without the knowledge requisite to direct their judgment.

I had got, I don't know how, the most contemptuous opinion of the Italian drama. I had been told, there was not a tolerable actor at present in Italy, and I had been long taught to consider their comedy as the most despicable stuff in the world, which could not amuse, or even draw a smile from any person of taste, being quite destitute of true humour, full of ribaldry, and only proper for the meanest of the vulgar. Impressed with these sentiments, and eager to give his Grace a full demonstration of their justness, I accompanied the D— of H—— to the stage-box of one of the play-houses the very day of our arrival at Venice.

The piece was a comedy, and the most entertaining character in it was that of a man who stuttered. In this defect, and in the singular grimaces with which the actor accompanied it, consisted a great part of the amusement.

Disgusted at such a pitiful substitution for wit and humour, I expressed a contempt for an audience which could be entertained by such buffoonery, and who could take pleasure in the exhibition of a natural infirmity.

While we inwardly indulged sentiments of self-approbation, on account of the refinement and superiority of our own taste, and supported the dignity of those sentiments by a disdainful gravity of countenance, the Stutterer was giving a piece of information to Harlequin which greatly interested him, and to which he listened with every mark of eagerness. This unfortunate speaker had just arrived at the most important part of his narrative, which was, to acquaint the impatient listener where his mistress was concealed, when he unluckily stumbled on a word of six or seven syllables, which completely obstructed the progress of his narration. He attempted it again and again, but always without success. You may have observed that, though many other words would explain his meaning equally well, you may as soon make a Saint change his religion, as prevail on a

Stutterer to accept of another word in place of that at which he has stumbled. He adheres to his first word to the last, and will sooner expire with it in his throat, than give it up for any other you may offer. Harlequin, on, the present occasion, presented his friend with a dozen; but he rejected them all with disdain, and persisted in his unsuccessful attempts on that which had first come in his way. At length, making a desperate effort, when all the spectators were gaping in expectation of his safe delivery, the cruel word came up with its broad side foremost, and stuck directly across the unhappy man's wind-pipe. He gaped, and panted, and croaked; his face flushed, and his eyes seemed ready to start from his head. Harlequin unbuttoned the Stutterer's waistcoat, and the neck of his shirt; he fanned his face with his cap, and held a bottle of hartshorn to his nose. At length, fearing his patient would expire, before he could give the desired intelligence, in a fit of despair he pitched his head full in the dying man's stomach, and the word bolted out of his mouth to the most distant part of the house.

This was performed in a manner so perfectly droll, and the humorous absurdity of the expedient came so unexpectedly upon me, that I immediately burst into a most excessive fit of laughter, in which I was accompanied by the D—, and by your young friend Jack, who was along with us; and our laughter continued in such loud,

violent, and repeated fits, that the attention of the audience being turned from the stage to our box, occasioned a renewal of the mirth all over the playhouse with greater vociferation than at first.

When we returned to the inn, the D— of H—— asked me, If I were as much convinced as ever, that a man must be perfectly devoid of taste, who could condescend to laugh at an Italian comedy?

L E T T E R XXIII.

Padua

WE were detained at Venice several days longer than we intended, by excessive falls of rain, which rendered the road to Verona impassable. Relinquishing therefore, the thoughts of visiting that city for the present, the **D**— determined to go to Ferrara by water. For this purpose I engaged two barks; in one of which the chaises, baggage, and some of the servants, proceeded directly to Ferrara, while we embarked in the other for Padua.

Having crossed the Lagune, we entered the Brenta, but could continue our route by that river no farther than the village of Doglio, where there is a bridge; but the waters were so much swelled by the late rains, that there was not room for our boat to pass below the arch. Quitting the boat, therefore, till our return, we hired two open chaises, and continued our journey along the banks of the Brenta to Padua.

Both sides of this river display gay, luxuriant scenes of magnificence and fertility, being ornamented by a great variety of beautiful villas, the works of Palladio and his disciples. The verdure of the meadows and gardens here is not surpassed by that of England.

The Venetian nobility, I am told, live with less restraint, and entertain their friends with greater freedom, at their villas, than at their palaces in town. It is natural to suppose, that a Venetian must feel peculiar satisfaction when his affairs permit him to enjoy the exhilarating view of green fields, and to breathe the fresh air of the country.

As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick, and sewers annow the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
Or dairy; each rural sight, each rural sound.

I confess, for my own part, I never felt the beauty of those lines of Milton with greater sensibility, than when I passed through the charming country which is watered by the Brenta, after having been pent up in the terraqueous town of Venice. As one reason which induced his Grace to visit Padua, at this time was, that he might pay his duty to his

R— H—— the D—— of G——, we waited on that prince as soon as we had his permission. His R— H—— has been here for some time with his D——s. He was very ill at Venice, and has been advised to remove to this place for the benefit of the air. It is with much satisfaction I add, that he is now out of danger, a place of intelligence with which you will have your power to give pleasure to many people in England.

No city in the world has less affinity with the country than Venice, and few can have more than Padua; for great part of the circuit within the walls is unbuilt, and the town in general so thinly inhabited, that grass is seen in many places in the interstices of the stones with which the streets are paved. The houses are built on porticoes, which, when the town was well inhabited, and in a flourishing condition, may have had a magnificent appearance; but in its present state, they rather give it a greater air of melancholy and of gloom.

The Franciscan church, dedicated to St. Antonio, the great patron of this city, was the place we were first led to by the Cicerone of our inn. The body of this holy person is inclosed in a sarcophagus, under an altar in the middle of the chapel, and is said to emit a very agreeable and refreshing flavour. Pious Catholics believe this to be the natural effluvia of the saint's body;

while heretics assert, that the perfume (for a perfume there certainly is) proceeds from certain balsams rubbed on the marble every morning, before the votaries come to pay their devotions. I never presume to give an opinion on contested points of this kind; but I may be allowed to say, that if this sweet odour really proceeds from the holy Franciscan, he emits a very different smell from any of the brethren of that order whom I ever had an opportunity of approaching.

The walls of this church are covered with votive offerings of ears, eyes, arms, legs, noses, and every part almost of the human body, in token of cures performed by this saint; for whatever part has been the seat of the disease, a representation of it is hung up in silver or gold, according to the gratitude and wealth of the patient.

At a small distance from this church is a place called the school of St. Antonio. Here many of the actions of the Saint are painted in fresco; some of them by Titian. Many miracles of a very extraordinary nature are here recorded. I observed one in particular, which, if often repeated, might endanger the peace of families. The saint thought proper to loosen the tongue of a new born child, and endue it with the faculty of speech; on which the infant,

with an imprudence natural to its age, declared, in an audible voice, before a large company, who was its *real* father. The miracles attributed to this celebrated Saint greatly exceed in number those recorded by the Evangelists of our Saviour; and although it is not asserted, that St. Antonio has as yet raised himself from the dead, yet his admirers here record things of him which are almost equivalent. When an impious Turk had secretly placed fireworks under the chapel, with an intention to blow it up, they affirm, that St. Antonio hallooed three times from his marble coffin, which terrified the infidel, and discovered the plot. This miracle is the more miraculous, as the Saint's tongue was cut out, and is actually preserved in a chrystal vessel, and shewn as a precious relic to all who have a curiosity to see it. I started this as a difficulty which seemed to bear a little against the authenticity of the miracle; and the ingenious person to whom the objection was made, seemed at first somewhat nonplussed; but after recollecting himself, he observed, that this, which at first seemed an objection, was really a confirmation of the fact; for the Saint was not said to have spoken, but only to have hallooed, which a man can do without a tongue; but if his tongue had not been cut out, added he, there is no reason to doubt that the Saints would have revealed the Turkish plot in plain articulate language.

From the Tower of the Franciscan church we had a very distinct view of the beautiful Country which surrounds Padua. All the objects, at a little distance, seemed delightful and flourishing; but every thing under our eyes indicated wretchedness and decay.

MANNERS IN ITALY.

L E T T E R XXIV.

Padua.

THE next church, in point of rank, but far superior in point of architecture, is that of St. Justina, built from a design of Palladio, and reckoned, by some people, one of the most elegant he ever gave. St. Justina is said to have suffered martyrdom where the church is built, which was the reason of erecting it on that particular spot. It would have been fortunate for the pictures in this church if the Saint had suffered on a piece of drier ground, for they seem considerably injured by the damps which surround the place where it now stands. There is a wide area in front of the church, called the Prato della Valle, where booths and shops are erected for all kinds of merchandise during the fairs. Part of this, which is never allowed to be prophaned by the buyers and sellers, is called Campo Santo, because there a great number of Christian martyrs are said to have been put to death.

St. Justina's church is adorned with many altars, embellished with sculpture. The pavements

is remarkably rich, being a kind of Mosaic work, of marble of various colours. Many other precious materials are wrought as ornaments to this church, but there is one species of jewels in which it abounds, more than, perhaps, any church in Christendom; which is, the bones of martyrs. They have here a whole well full, belonging to those who were executed in the Prato della Valle; and what is of still greater value, the Benedictines, to whom this church belongs, assert, that they are also in possession of the bodies of the two evangelists St. Matthew and St. Luke. The Franciscans belonging to a convent at Venice dispute the second of those two great prizes, and declare, that *they* are possessed of the true body of St. Luke, this in St. Justina's being only an imposture. The matter was referred to the Pope, who gave a decision in favour of one of the bodies; but this does not prevent the proprietors of the other from still persisting in their original claim, so that there is no likelihood of the dispute being finally determined till the day of judgment.

The hall of the Town-house of Padua is one of the largest I ever saw. From the best guess I could make, after stepping it, I should think it about three hundred English feet long, by one hundred in breadth: the emblematical and astrological paintings, by Giotto, are much decayed. This immense hall is on the second floor, and is ornamented with the busts and statues of some

eminent persons. The Cenotaph of Livy, the historian, who was a native of Padua, is erected here. The University, formerly so celebrated, is now, like every thing else in this city, on the decline; the Theatre for Anatomy could contain five or six hundred students, but the voice of the Professor is like that of him who crieth in the wilderness. The licentious spirit of the students, which formerly was carried to such unwarrantable lengths, and made it dangerous to walk in the streets of this city at night, is now entirely extinct: it has gradually declined with the numbers of its students. Whether the ardour for literature, for which the students of this university were distinguished, has abated in the same proportion, I cannot determine; but I am informed, that by far the greater number of the young men who now attend the university, are designed for the priesthood, and apply to the study of divinity as a science, for comprehending and preaching the mysterious parts of which, a very small portion of learning has been observed to succeed better than a great deal.

There is a cloth manufactory in this city; and I was told, that the inhabitants of Venice, not excepting the nobles, wear no other cloth than what is made here. This particular manufactory, it may therefore be supposed, succeeds very well; but the excessive number of beggars with which this place swarms, is a strong proof that trade and manufactures in general are by

no means in a flourishing condition. In the course of my life I never saw such a number of beggars at one time, as attacked us at the church of St. Antonio. The D— of H— fell into a mistake, analogous to that of Sable in the Funeral, who complains, that the more money he gave his mourners to look sad, the merrier they looked. His G— gave all he had in his pocket to the clamorous multitude which surrounded him, on condition that they would hold their tongues, and leave us; on which they became more numerous, and more vociferous than before. Strangers who visit Padua will do well, therefore, to observe the gospel injunction, and perform their charities in secret.

L E T T E R XXV.

The Po.

IN my letter from Padua I neglected to mention her high pretensions to antiquity: she claims Antenor, the Trojan, as her founder; and this claim is supported by classical authority. In the first book of the *Æneid*, Venus complains to Jupiter, that her son *Æneas* is still a vagabond on the seas, while Antenor has been permitted to establish himself, and build a city in Italy.

Hic tamen ille urbem Patavi sedesque locavit.

At length he founded Padua's happy seat.

DRYDEN.

Lucan also, in his *Pharfalia*, describing the augur who read in the skies the events of that decisive day, alludes to the same story of Antenor;

Euganeo, si vera fides memorantibus, augur
Colle sedens, Aponus terris ubi fumifer exit,
Atque Antenorei dispergitur unda Timavi

VOL. I.

K

Venit funma dies, geritur res maxima dixit;
Impia concurrunt Pompeii et Cæsar's arma.

Where Aponus first springs in smoaky steam,
And full Timavus rolls his nobler stream;
Upon a hill that day, if fame be true,
A learned augur sat the skies to view:
'Tis come, the great event is come (he cry'd)!
Our impious chiefs their wicked war decide.

Rowe.

Some modern critics have asserted, that the two poets have been guilty of a geographical mistake, as the river Timavus empties itself into the Adriatic Gulph near Trieste, about a hundred miles from Padua; and that the Aponus is near Padua, and about the same distance from Timavus.

If, therefore, Antenor built a city where the river Timavus rushes into the sea, that city must have been situated at a great distance from where Padua now stands. The Paduan antiquarians, therefore, accuse Virgil, without scruple, of this blunder, that they may retain the Trojan Prince as their ancestor. But those who have more regard for the character of Virgil than the antiquity of Padua, insist upon it, that the poet was in the right, and that the city which Antenor built, was upon the Banks of Timavus, and exactly a hundred miles from modern Padua. As for Lucan, he is left in the lurch by both sides,

though, in my poor opinion, we may naturally suppose, that one of the streams which ran into Timavus was, at the time he wrote, called Aponus, which vindicates the poet, without weakening the relation between the Paduans and Antenor.

The inhabitants of Padua themselves seem to have been a little afraid of trusting their claim entirely to classical authority; for an old sarcophagus having been dug up in the year 1283, with an unintelligible inscription upon it, this was declared to be the tomb of Antenor, and was placed in one of the streets, and surrounded with a ballustrade; and, *to put the matter out of doubt*, a Latin inscription assures the reader, that it contains the body of the renowned Antenor, who, having escaped from Troy, had drove the Euganei out of the country, and built this identical city of Padua.

Though the Paduans find that there are people ill-natured enough to assert, that this sarcophagus does not contain the bones of the illustrious Trojan, yet they can defy the malice of those cavillers to prove, that they belong to any other person; upon which negative proof, joined to what has been mentioned above, they rest the merit of their pretensions.

After remaining a few days at Padua, we returned to the village of Doglio, where we had

left our vessel. We stopped, and visited some of the villas on the banks of the Brenta. The apartments are gay and spacious, and must be delightful in summer; but none of the Italian houses seem calculated for the winter, which, nevertheless, I am informed, is sometimes as severe in this country as in England.

Having embarked in our little vessel, we soon entered a canal, of about twenty-two Italian miles in length, which communicates with the Po, and we were drawn along, at a pretty good rate, by two horses. We passed last night in the vessel, as we shall this; for there is no probability of our reaching Ferrara till to-morrow. The banks of this famous river are beautifully fertile. Finding that we could keep up with the vessel, we amused ourselves the greatest part of the day in walking. The pleasure we feel on this classical ground, and the interest we take in all the objects around, is not altogether derived from their own native beauties; a great part of it arises from the magic colouring of poetical description.

The accounts we have had lately of the King of Prussia's bad health, I suppose, are not true; or if they are, I have good hopes he will recover: I found them on the calm and serene aspect which Eridanus wears at present, which is not the case when the fate of any very great person is depending. You remember what a rage he

was in, and what a tumult he raised immediately before the death of Julius Cæsar.

Proluit infano contorquens vortice sylvas
Fluviorum Rex Eridanus, camposque per omnes;
Cum stabulis armenta tulit.

Dryden translates these lines,

Then rising in his might, the King of Floods
Rush'd thro' the forests, tore the lofty woods;
And, rolling onward, with a sweepy sway,
Bore houses, herds, and labouring hinds away.

Rising in his might is happy, but the rest is not so simple as the original, and much less expressive; there wants the *infano contorquens vortice sylvas*.

It is not surprising that the Po is so much celebrated by the Roman poets, since it is, unquestionably, the finest river in Italy.—

Where every stream in heavenly numbers flows.

It seems to have been the favourite river of Virgil;

Gemina auratus taurino cornua vultu
Eridanus, quo non alius per pinguia culta
In mare purpureum violentior influit amnis.

Whence bull-faced Po adorned with gilded horns,
Than whom no river thro' such level meads,
Down to the sea, with swifter torrents speeds.

WARTON.

And Mr. Addison, at the sight of this river, is inspired with a degree of enthusiasm, which does not always animate his poetry.

Fired with a thousand raptures, I survey,
Eridanus thro' flowery meadows stray ;
The King of Floods ! that, rolling o'er their plains,
The towering Alps of half their moisture drains,
And, proudly swoln with a whole winter's snows,
Distributes wealth and plenty where he flows.

Notwithstanding all that the Latin poets, and in imitation of them, those of other nations, have sung of the Po, I am convinced that no river in the world has been so well sung as the Thames.

Thou too great father of the British floods !
With joyful pride survey'st our lofty woods ;
Where tow'ring oaks their growing honours rear,
And future navies on thy shores appear,
Not Neptune's self, from all her streams, receives
A wealthier tribute, than to thine he gives.
No seas so rich, so gay no banks appear,
No lake so gentle, and no spring so clear ;
Nor Po so swells the fabling poets' lays,
While led along the skies his current strays,
As thine, which visits Windsor's fam'd abodes.

If you are still refractory, and stand up for the panegyrists of the Po, I must call Denham

in aid of my argument, and I hope you will have the taste and candour to acknowledge, that the following are, beyond comparifon, the noblest lines that ever were written on a river.

My eye defcending from the hill, furvey
Where Thames among the wanton vallies ftrays.
Thames, the moft loved of all the Ocean's fons,
By his old fire, to his embraces runs ;
Hafting to pay his tribute to the fea,
Like mortal Life to meet Eternity.
Though with thofe freams he no refemblance hold,
Whofe foam is amber, and their gravel gold ;
His genuine and lefs guilty wealth t'explore,
Search not his bottom, but furvey his fhore ;
O'er which he kindly fpreads his fpacious wing,
And hatches plenty for th' enfuing fpring ;
Nor then deftroys it with too fond a ftay,
Like mothers which their children overlay.
Nor with a fudden and impetuous wave,
Like profufe kings, refumes the wealth he gave.
No unexpected inundations fpoil
The mower's hopes, nor mock the plowman's toil :
But, godlike, his unweary'd bounty flows :
Firft loves to do, then loves the good he does.
Nor are his bleffings to his banks confined,
But free and common as the fea or wind ;
When he, to boaft, or to difperfe his ftore,
Full of the tribute of his grateful fhores,
Vifits the world, and in his flying towers,
Brings home to us, and makes both Indies ours ;
Finds wealth where 'tis, beftows it where it wants,
Cities in deferts, woods in cities plants.

So that, to us, no thing, no place is strange,
 While his fair bosom is the world's exchange.
 O could I flow like thee, and make thy stream,
 My great example, as it is my theme!
 Though deep, yet clear; though gentle, yet not
 dull;
 Strong without rage, without o'erflowing full.
 Heaven her Eridanus no more shall boast,
 Whose fame in thine, like lesser current, 's lost.

You will suspect that I am hard pushed to
 make out a letter, when I send you such long
 quotations from the poets. This, however, is
 not my only reason. While we remain on the
 Po, rivers naturally become the subject of my
 letter. I asserted that the Thames has been more
 sublimely sung than the favourite river of classi-
 cal authors, and I wished to lay some of my
 strongest proofs before you at once, to save you
 the trouble of turning to the originals.

L E T T E R XXVI.

Ferrara.

WE arrived here early this morning. The magnificent streets and number of fine buildings shew that this has formerly been a rich and flourishing city. The present inhabitants, however, who are very few in proportion to the extent of the town, bear every mark of poverty.

The happiness of the subjects in a despotic government depends much more on the personal character of the sovereign, than in a free state; and the subjects of little Princes, who have but a small extent of territory, are more affected by the good and bad qualities of those Princes, than the inhabitants of great and extensive empires. I had frequent opportunities of making this remark in Germany, where, without having seen the Prince, or heard his character, one may often discover his dispositions and turn of mind, for examining into the circumstances and general situation of the people. When the Prince is vain and luxurious, as he

considers himself equal in rank, so he endeavours to vie in magnificence with more powerful sovereigns, and those attempts always terminate in the oppression and poverty of his subjects; but when the Prince, on the other hand, is judicious, active, and benevolent, as the narrow limits of his territories make it easy for him to be acquainted with the real situation and true interest of his subjects, his good qualities operate more directly and effectually for their benefit, than if his dominions were more extensive, and he himself obliged to govern by the agency of ministers.

The Duchy of Ferrara was formerly governed by its own Dukes, many of whom happened to be of the character last mentioned, and the Ferrarese was, for several generations, one of the happiest and most flourishing spots in Italy. In the year 1597 it was annexed to the Ecclesiastical State, and has ever since been gradually falling into poverty and decay. It must be owing to some essential error in the Government, when a town like this, situated in a fertile soil, upon a navigable river near the Adriatic, remains in poverty. Except the change of its Sovereign, all the other causes, which I have heard assigned for the poverty of Ferrara, existed in the days of its prosperity.

Though the citizens of Ferrara have not been able to preserve their trade and industry, yet

they still retain an old privilege of wearing swords by their sides. This privilege extends to the lowest mechanics, who strut about with great dignity. Fencing is the only science in a flourishing condition in this town, which furnishes all the towns in Italy with skilful fencing-masters. Ferrara was famous formerly for a manufactory of sword-blades. The Scotch Highlanders, who had a greater demand for swords, and were nicer in the choice of their blades than any other people, used to get them from a celebrated maker in this town, of the name of Andrea di Ferrara. The best kind of broad swords are still called by the Highlanders True Andrew Ferraras.

There are two brass statues opposite to one of the principal churches. One is of Nicholo Marquis of Este, and the other of Borso of Este, the first Duke of Ferrara, whose memory is still held in great veneration in this city. I had the curiosity to go to the Benedictine church, merely to see the place where Ariosto lies buried. The degree of importance in which men are held by their cotemporaries and by posterity, is very different. This fine fanciful old bard has done more honour to modern Italy, than forty-nine in fifty of the Popes and Princes to which she has given birth, and while those, who were the gaze of the multitude during their lives, are now entirely forgotten, his fame increases with the progress of time. In his lifetime, perhaps,

his importance, in the eyes of his countrymen, arose from the protection of the family of Este; now he gives importance, in the eyes of all Europe, to the illustrious names of his patrons, and to the country where he was born.

The Emperor, and two of his brothers, lodged lately at the inn where we now are. Our landlord is so vain of this, that he cannot be prevailed on to speak on any other subject; he has entertained me with a thousand particulars about his illustrious guests; it is impossible he should ever forget those anecdotes, for he has been constantly repeating them ever since the Royal Brothers left his house. I asked him what we could have for supper. He answered, That we should sup in the very same room in which his Imperial Majesty had dined. I repeated my question; and he replied, he did not believe there were three more affable Princes in the world. I said, I hoped supper would be soon ready; and he told me, that the Archduke was fond of fricassée, but the Emperor preferred a fowl plain roasted. I said, with an air of impatience, that I should be much obliged to him if he would send in supper. He bowed, and walked to the door; but, before he disappeared, he turned about and assured me, that although his Majesty ate no more than an ordinary man, yet he paid like an Emperor.

To perpetuate the memory of this great event, of the Emperor and his two brothers having dined at his house, the landlord got an Ecclesiastic of his acquaintance to compose the following pompous inscription, which is now engraven upon a stone at the door of his inn :

QUOD

TABERNA HÆC DIVERSORIA
 HOSPITES HABUERIT TRES FRATRES
 CONSILIIIS, MORIBUS, ET IN DEUM PIETATE,
 PRÆCLAROS,
 MARIÆ THERES. BOHEMIÆ ET HUNG.
 REGINÆ, &c. &c.
 ET TANTÆ MATRIS VIRTUTI SIMILLIMOS
 MAXIMILIANUM AUSTRIÆ ARCHIDUCEM,
 CENÆ ET QUIETATIS CAUSA,
 TERTIO CALEND. JUNII M.DCC.LXXV.
 DIE POSTERO PRANDIUM SUMPTUROS.
 PETRUM LEOP. MAGN. HETRUC. DUCEM,
 ET JOSEPHUM SECUND. ROM. IMPERATOREM.
 SECULI NOSTRI ORNAMENTUM ET DECUS,
 NE TEMPORIS LONGITUDO
 HUIUSCE LOCI FELICITATEM OBLITERET
 PERENNE HOC MONUMENTUM.

Three Brothers, the sons of Maria Theresa, Queen of Bohemia and Hungary, all of them distinguished by their virtues, and worthy of so illustrious a mother, were entertained at this inn, viz. Maximilian Arch-Duke of Austria, who actually supped and passed the night here, on the 30th of May, 1785.

Peter Leopold Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Emperor Joseph the Second, the ornament and glory of the age, who dined here the following day.

That such important events may not be lost in the flight of time, let this durable monument inform the latest posterity of the happiness which this inn enjoyed.

No three persons ever acquired immortality on easier terms : it has only cost them one night's lodging at an indifferent inn, when better quarters could not be had.

LETTER XXVII.

Bologna.

WHEN we left Ferrara, our landlord insisted on our taking six horses to each chaise, on account of the badness of the roads, the soil about the town being moist and heavy. I attempted to remonstrate that four would be sufficient; but he cut me short, by protesting, that the roads were so very deep, that he would not allow the best friend he had in the world, not even the Emperor himself, were he there in person, to take fewer than six. There was no more to be said after this; the same argument would have been irresistible, had he insisted on our taking twelve.

As you draw near to Bologna, the country gradually improves in cultivation; and, for some miles before you enter the town, seems one continued garden. The vineyards are not divided by hedges, but by rows of elms and mulberry trees; the vines hanging in a most beautiful picturesque manner, in festoons from one tree to another. This country is not only fertile in vines, but likewise in corn, olives, and pasturage,

and has, not without foundation, acquired the name of Bologna la Graffa.

This town is well built, and populous; the number of inhabitants amounting to seventy, or perhaps eighty thousand. The houses in general have lofty porticoes, which would have a better effect if the streets were not so narrow; but in this particular, magnificence is sacrificed to conveniency; for, in Italy, shade is considered as a luxury.

The Duchy of Bologna had conditions granted to it, upon submitting to the Papal dominion. Those conditions have been observed with a great degree of punctuality and good faith, which many zealous Protestants would not expect in the church of Rome.

Bologna retains the name of a republic, sends an ambassador to the Pope's court, and the word *Libertas* is inscribed on the arms and coin of the State, with the flattering capitals *S. P. Q. B.* The civil government and police of the town is allowed to remain in the hands of the magistrates, who are chosen by the Senate, which formerly consisted of forty members; but since this republic came under the protection, as it is called, of the Pope, he thought proper to add ten more, but the whole fifty still retain the name of the *Quaranta*. Mankind, in general,

are more alarmed by a change of name, in things which they have long regarded with veneration, than by a real change in the nature of the things themselves. The Pope may have had some good political reason for augmenting the number of the council to fifty; but he could have none for calling them the Council of Fifty, if the people chose rather to call fifty men assembled together the Council of *Forty*. One of the Senators presides in the Senate, and is called the Gonfalonier, from his carrying the standard (Gonfalone) of the republic. He is chief magistrate, is attended by guards, and is constantly at the palace, or next it, to be ready on any emergency; but he remains only two months in office, and the Senators take it by turns.

In the midst of all this appearance of independency, a Cardinal Legate from Rome governs this republic: he is appointed by the Pope, with a Vice Legate, and other assistants. The orders which the Legate issues, are supposed to be with the leave of the Senate; at least, they are never disputed by that prudent body of men. The office, which is of higher dignity than any other now in the gift of the Court of Rome, continues for three years; at the expiration of that time, his Holiness either appoints a new Legate, or confirms the old one in the office for three years longer.

This ecclesiastical viceroy lives in great magnificence, and has a numerous suite of pages, equerries, and halberdiers, who attend him in the city. When he goes into the country, he is accompanied by guards on horseback.

The Gonfalonier and magistrates regulate all the usual matters which regard the police, and decide, in common causes, according to the laws and ancient forms of the republic; but there is no doubt that, in affairs of great importance, and, indeed, as often as he chooses to interfere, the Cardinal Legate influences decisions. This must be mortifying to the Senators and noble families, but is less felt by the people in general, who have every appearance of living under a mild and beneficent Government.

The inhabitants of Bologna carry on a very considerable trade in silks and velvets, which are manufactured here in great perfection. The country produces immense quantities of oil, wine, flax, and hemp; and furnishes all Europe with sausages, Macaroni, liqueurs, and essences. The people seem to be industrious, and to be allowed to enjoy the fruits of their labour; the markets are most plentifully provided with provisions; fruit is to be had in great variety, and all excellent in its kind; the common wine of the country is a light white wine of an agree-

able taste, which strangers prefer to any of the French or German wines to be had here. Those who are not pleased with the entertainment they meet with at the inns in this city, it will be a difficult matter to please; they must be possessed of a degree of such nicety, both in their palates and tempers, as will render them exceedingly troublesome to themselves and others, not only in their travels through Italy, but in the whole course of their journey through life.

There are a great number of palaces in this city. What is called the Public Palace, is, by far, the most spacious, but not the most elegant. In this the Cardinal Legate is lodged. There are also apartments for the Gonfalonier; and halls, or chambers, for some of the courts of justice. This building, though of a gloomy and irregular form without, contains some very magnificent apartments, and a few good pictures; the most esteemed are, a large one, by Guido, of the Virgin, and the infant Jesus, seated on the rainbow; a Sampson by Guido also, refreshing himself with the water which issues from the jaw-bone with which he has just defeated the Philistines; and a St. John the Baptist, by Raphael, a duplicate of that in the Palais Royal at Paris, but thought, by some connoisseurs, greatly inferior. For my part, I think it is to be regretted, that this great painter did not employ the time he spent on one of them, at

least, on some subject more worthy of his talents. A single figure, unemployed, can never please so much as a groupe, occupied in some interesting action. It is a pity that a painter, capable, even in a moderate degree, of exciting the passions, should confine his talents to solitary figures. How much more unworthy of *him* who possessed all the sublimity and pathos of the art!

On his arrival at this town, the first object which strikes the eye of a stranger, is a noble marble fountain, in the area before the Palazzo Publico. The principal figure is a statue of Neptune, eleven feet in height; one of his hands is stretched out before him, in the other he holds the Trident. The body and limbs are finely proportioned, the anatomy perfect, the character of the countenance severe and majestic. This figure of Neptune, as well as all the others of boys, dolphins, and syrens, which surround it, are in bronze. The whole is the workmanship of Giovanni di Bologna, and is highly esteemed; yet there seems to be an impropriety in making water flow in streams from the breasts of the sea nymphs, or syrens.

Over the entrance of the Legate's palace, is a bronze statue of a Pope. The tiara, and other parts of the Papal uniform, are not so favourable to the sculptor's genius, as the naked

simplicity in which Neptune appears. A female traveller, however, not extravagantly fond of the fine arts, would rather be observed admiring the sculptor's skill in imitating the folds of the sacerdotal robes, than his anatomical accuracy in forming the majestic proportions of the Sea Divinity.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

Bologna.

THE university of Bologna is one of the most ancient and most celebrated seats of literature in Europe; and the academy for the arts and sciences, founded by the Count Marfigli at the beginning of the present century, is sufficient, of itself, to engage strangers to visit this city, if there was nothing else worthy of their curiosity. Over the gate of this magnificent edifice is the following liberal inscription.

BONONIENSE SCIENTIARUM ATQUE ARTIUM
INSTITUTUM AD PUBLICUM TOTIUS
ORBIS USUM.

The Bononian Academy of arts and sciences, for the general use of the whole world.

Here is a most valuable library, in three spacious rooms, where any person may study, and have the use of the books, four hours every day; also apartments for the students of sculpture, painting, architecture, chemistry, anatomy,

astronomy, and every branch of natural philosophy. They are all ornamented with designs, models, instruments, and every kind of apparatus requisite for illustrating those sciences. There are also professors, who regularly read lectures, and instruct the students in those various parts of knowledge. There is a hall, full of models in architecture and fortification, a valuable collection of medals, and another of natural curiosities, as animals, earths, ores, minerals, and a complete collection of specimens, to assist the study of the *Materia Medica*, and every part of Natural History. A gallery of statues, consisting of a few originals, and very fine casts of the best statues in Italy. I went one evening to the academy of painting and sculpture; two men stood in different attitudes on a table, in the middle of the room; about fifty students sat in the amphitheatre around them, some drawing their figures in chalks, others modelling them in wax, or clay. As each student viewed the two men from different points, the variety of manner in the different students, together with the alteration in the *Chiaro Scuro* under each point of view, gave every drawing the appearance of being done from a different figure. Nothing can be so advantageous to the young student as this kind of exercise, which is sometimes practised by day-light, and sometimes by the light of lamps, and must give a fuller idea of the effect of light and shade than any other method.

Honorary premiums are distributed every year among the artists, for the best designs in painting, sculpture, and architecture.

The Anatomical Theatre is adorned with statues of celebrated physicians; and in the Museum, which belongs to it, there are abundance of anatomical preparations; also a complete suite of anatomical figures in wax. A man and woman in the natural state; the same with the skin and cellular membrane removed, the external muscles of the whole body and limbs appearing. In the subsequent figures the more external muscles are gradually removed, till nothing but the simple skeleton remains. These figures are very well rendered, preserving the natural appearance and situation of the muscles and blood-vessels, with as much exactness as could be expected in a work of this nature. There are also models in wax, of particular parts, and of several of the viscera of the human body separately; yet those waxen models could not stand in comparison with the preparations of the real parts in Dr. Hunter's museum. If brought to that test, the Bologna waxworks, though admirable in their kind, would appear as their best casts of the Vatican Apollo and Laocoon would, if placed beside the originals. Indeed, the real preparations to be seen here, are far inferior to those of that great anatomist; who is now possessed of the most complete, and most accurate collection of anatomical

preparations, that ever was made by human skill and industry. We have faithfully performed our duty in visiting all the churches and palaces of this city, which contain some of the highest specimens of art; yet, as the recital might be less amusing than the tour itself, I shall exercise your patience with great moderation on that subject.

The church of St. Petronius forms part of that large, irregular square, in which the fountain, formerly mentioned, stands; it is the largest in Bologna. In the pavement of this church, Cassini drew his meridian line; and within the walls of this same edifice the Emperor Charles the Fifth was crowned. Those circumstances may interest the astronomer, and the historian; but the statue of a soldier, which stands in one of the chapels, engages the attention of the pious Catholic. This man, being at play, and in danger of losing all his money, offered up a very fervent prayer to the Virgin Mary, for a little better luck; to which she, who never shewed any favour to gamesters, turned a deaf ear. When he found that his bad fortune continued, this furious wretch drew his sword, and wounded both the Virgin, and the Infant in her arms. He instantly, as you may suppose, fell to the ground, deprived of motion; he was carried to prison, and condemned to an ignominious and painful death. While he remained under confinement, he came to a pro-

per sense of his wickedness; and the blessed Virgin was so much softened by his repentance, that she restored him to the use of his limbs; and the Judges, taking the hint, gave him a full pardon. As a *satisfactory* proof of this memorable event, they shew the identical sword with which the assault was made.

A Dominican convent, situated on the top of a hill, about three miles from this city, is in possession of a portrait of the Virgin, by St. Luke. It is not perfectly known how it came there; any enquiry of that nature favours of heresy, and might give offence. The people in general are persuaded of its originality, and happy in the honour of such a neighbour. This portrait has wrought many miracles in favour of the inhabitants of Bologna. A curious gallery, open to the south, and closed by a wall to the north, is built all the way from this city to the convent. On the open side it is supported by a long row of pillars, and was erected by voluntary contribution, in honour of the Virgin, and for the conveniency of pilgrims. This long colonade is about twelve feet in breadth, from the pillars to the wall, and of a convenient height; all the communities of the town walk once a year, in solemn procession, to the convent, and bring the holy picture to visit the city. It is carried through the principal streets, attended by every inhabitant who can afford to purchase a wax taper. During this procession, the bells

continue ringing, the cannon are fired ; and the troops under arms observe the same ceremonies, when the picture passes, as if it were Commander in Chief of the forces. The common people imagine, the picture is extremely fond of this annual visit to the town of Bologna ; they even are convinced, that, if it were not carried, it would descend from the frame, and walk the whole way on foot ; but they do not desire to see the experiment made, both because it might disoblige the Virgin, and because, if the picture were once set a walking, there is no knowing where it would stop.

Though the nobility of Bologna are not now very rich, many of their palaces are furnished in a magnificent taste, and contain paintings of great value. The palaces were built and ornamented, when the proprietors were richer, and when the finest works of architecture and painting could be procured on easier terms than at present. The galleries, and apartments, are spacious and magnificent ; yet there are circumstances in the most splendid, that must hurt the eye of those who are accustomed to that perfect exactness in finishing which prevails in English houses. The glass of the windows of some palaces is divided into little square panes, which are joined together by lead ; and the floors of all are so very indifferently laid, that you often feel a loose brick shaking under your feet as you walk through the finest apartments.

The most precious ornaments of the palaces are the paintings, particularly those of the celebrated masters which this city had the honour of producing. Raphael is generally allowed to have excelled all painters in the sublimity of his ideas, the grouping of his figures, the beauty of his heads, the elegance of his forms, and the correctness of his outlines; yet, in the opinion of some, he has oftner imitated those noble ideas of beauty, transmitted to us by the Greek sculptors, than what he saw, or could observe, in nature. Those who hold this opinion assert, that the best masters of the Lombard School studied, with equal assiduity, the elegance of the antique statues, and the simplicity of nature; and from this combined attention to both, with geniuses less sublime, and not so universal, as that of the Roman painter, they have produced works equal, if not superior in some respects, to his. In all this, I beg you may keep in your remembrance, that I am not affecting to give any opinion of my own, but merely repeating the sentiments of others.

Next to Rome itself, there is, perhaps, no town in the world so rich in paintings as Bologna. The churches and palaces, besides many admired pieces by other masters, are full of the works of the great masters who were natives of this city. I must not lead you among those master-pieces; it is not for so poor a judge as I am to point the peculiar excellencies of the

Caraccis, Dominichino, Albano, or compare the energy of Guercino's pencil with the grace of Guido's. With regard to the last, I shall venture to say, that the graceful air of his young men, the elegant forms, and mild persuasive devotion, of his Madonas, the art with which, to all the inviting loveliness of female features, he joins all the gentleness and modesty which belong to the female character, are the peculiar excellencies of this charming painter.

It requires no knowledge in the art of painting, no connoisseurship to discover those beauties in the works of Guido; all who have eyes, and a heart, must see and feel them. But the picture more admired than all the rest, and considered, by the judges, as his master-piece, owes its eminence to a different kind of merit; it can claim none from any of the circumstances above enumerated. The piece I mean is in the Sampieri palace, and distinguished by a silk curtain, which hangs before it. The subject is, the Repentance of St. Peter, and consists of two figures, that of the Saint who weeps, and a young apostle who endeavours to comfort him. The only picture at Bologna, which can dispute celebrity with this, is that of St. Cecilia, in the church of St. Georgio in Monte. This picture is greatly praised by Mr. Addison, and is reckoned one of Raphael's capital pieces. If I had nothing else to convince me that I had no judgment in painting, this would be sufficient. I have examined

it over and over with great attention, and a real desire of discovering its superlative merit ; and I have the mortification to find, that I cannot perceive it.—After this confession, I presume you will not desire to hear any thing farther from me on the subject of painting.

L E T T E R XXIX.

Ancona.

I N our way from Bologna to this place, we passed through Ravenna, a disagreeable town, though at one period the seat of empire; for, after Attila had left Italy, Valentinian chose Ravenna, in preference to Rome, for his residence, that he might always be ready to repel the Huns and other Barbarians, who poured from the banks of the Danube, and prevent their penetrating into Italy. The same reason afterwards induced Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, to keep his court at this city of Ravenna, after he had defeated and killed Odoacer, and assumed the title of King of Rome. The ruins of his palace and his tomb now form part of the antiquities of Ravenna; among which I shall not detain you a moment, but proceed to the river of Pisatello, the famous Rubicon, which lies between this town and Rimini, and was the ancient boundary between Italy and Cisalpine Gaul. No Roman, returning to Rome, could pass in arms beyond this, without being deemed an enemy to his country. The small town of

Cesenate is situated near this brook, and the inhabitants value themselves not a little upon their vicinity to so celebrated a neighbour. But the people of Rimini have had the malice to endeavour to deprive them of this satisfaction: they affirm, that the rivulet Lusa, which is farther removed from Cesenate, and nearer to themselves, is the true Rubicon. I have considered this controversy with all the attention it merits; and I am of opinion, that the pretensions of Pisatello, which is also called Rugone, are the best founded. That you may not suspect my being influenced in my judgment by any motives but those of justice, I beg leave to inform you, that it is a matter of no importance to me which of the rivers is the real Rubicon, for we had the honour of passing *both* in our way to Rimini.

What Suetonius mentions concerning Cæsar's hesitation when he arrived at the banks of this river, does not agree with what the historian says a little before. *Quidam putant captum Imperii consuetudine, pensitatisque suis & inimicorum viribus, usum occasione rapiendæ dominationis, quam ætate prima concupisser.* . "Some are of opinion, that, captivated by the love of power, and having carefully weighed his own strength and that of his enemies, he had availed himself of this opportunity of seizing the supreme authority, which had been his passion from his early youth." And this, he adds, was the

opinion of Cicero, who says, that Cæsar had often in his mouth this verse :

Nam si violandum est jus, regnandi gratia
Violandum est, aliis rebus pietatem colas.

For if a violation of equity is ever excusable, it is when a crown is our object—On all other occasions we ought to cultivate justice.

It is most probable, that Cæsar took his resolution to cross the Rubicon as soon as Antony and Curio arrived in his camp, and afforded him a plausible pretext, by informing him and the army of the violent manner in which they had been driven from Rome by the Consul Lentulus and the adherents of Pompey. As for the phantom, which Suetonius informs us determined the Dictator while he was yet in hesitation, we may either consider it intirely as a fiction, or as a scene previously arranged by himself to encourage his army, who may be supposed to have had scruples in disobeying a decree of the Senate ; which declared those persons sacrilegious and parricides, devoting them at the same time to the infernal gods, who should pass over this river in arms. Cæsar was not of a character to be disturbed with religious scruples ; he never delayed an enterprize, we are told, on account of unfavourable omens. Ne religione quidem ulla a quoquam incepto absteritus un-

quam vel retardatus est. Quum immolanti aufugisset hostia, perfectionem adversus Scipionem & Jubam non distulit, &c. &c. "He never was deterred from any undertaking by religious scruples.—When the animal, destined for sacrifice, fled from the altar, this bad omen did not prevent Cæsar from marching against Scipio and Juba."

This hesitation, therefore, which is mentioned by Suetonius and Plutarch, has no resemblance with the ambitious and decisive character of Julius Cæsar; the picture which Lucan has drawn of him has much more spirit, and in all probability more likeness.

Cæsar ut adversam superato gurgite ripam,
Attigit, Hesperix vetitis & constitit arvis,
Hic, ait, hic pacem, temerataque jura relinquo;
Te, Fortuna, sequor; procul hinc jam sædera
sunto.

Credidimus fatis, utendum est judice bello.
Sic fatus, noctis tenebris rapit agmina ductor
Impiger, & torto Ballaris verbere fundæ
Ocyor, & missa Parthi post terga sagitta;
Vicinumque minax invadit Ariminum—

The leader now had passed the torrent o'er,
And reached fair Italy's forbidden shore:
Then rearing on the hostile bank his head,
Here, farewell peace and injured laws (he said)!

Since faith is broke, and leagues are set aside,
 Henceforth thou, goddess Fortune, art my guide. }
 Let fate and war the great event decide.
 He spoke ; and, on the dreadful task intent,
 Speedy to near Ariminum he bent ;
 To him the Balearic sling is slow,
 And the shaft loiters from the Parthian bow.

Rowe.

Though Rimini is in a state of great decay, there are some monuments of antiquity worthy the attention of the curious traveller. It is the ancient Ariminum, the first town of which Cæsar took possession after passing the Rubicon. In the market-place there is a kind of stone pedestal, with an inscription, declaring, that on it Cæsar had stood and harangued his army ; but the authenticity of this is not ascertained to the satisfaction of antiquarians.

We next passed through Pefaro, a very agreeable town, better built and paved than the other towns we have seen on the Adriatic shore. In the market-place there is a handsome fountain, and a statue of Pope Urban the Eighth, in a sitting posture. In the churches of this town there are some pictures by Baroccio, a painter, whose works some people esteem very highly, and who is thought to have imitated the manner of Raphael, and the tints of Correggio, not without success. He lived about the middle of the sixteenth century, and his colours seem to

have improved by time. I say, seem; for, in reality, all colours lose by time: but the operation of sun and air on pictures bringing all the colours to a kind of unison, occasions what is called Harmony, and is thought an improvement on some pictures. This road, along the Adriatic coast, is extremely pleasant. From Pesaro we proceeded to Fano, a little town, of nearly the same size, but more populous. It derives its name from a Temple of Fortune [Fanum Fortunæ], which stood here in the time of the Romans. All the towns of Italy, however religious they may be, are proud of their connections with those celebrated heathens. An image of the Goddess Fortune is erected on the fountain in the market-place, and the inhabitants show some ruins, which they pretend belong to the ancient Temple of Fortune; but what cannot be disputed, are the ruins of a triumphal arch in white marble, erected in honour of Augustus, and which was greatly damaged by the artillery of Pope Paul Second, when he besieged this town in the year 1463. The churches of this town are adorned with some excellent pictures; there is one particularly in the cathedral church, by Guercino, which is much admired. The subject is the marriage of Joseph: it consists of three principal figures; the High Priest, Joseph, and the Virgin.

A few miles beyond Fano, we crossed the river **Metro**, where Claudius Nero, the Roman

Consul, defeated Asdrubal, the brother of Hannibal. This was, perhaps, the most important victory that ever was gained by a Roman General; for, had Asdrubal been victorious, or been able to effect a junction with his brother, the troops he brought from Spain would have become of triple value as soon as they were under the direction of Hannibal; and it is not improbable that, with such a reinforcement, that most consummate General would have put an end to the Roman State; the glory of Carthage would have begun where that of Rome ended; and the history of the world would have been quite different from what it is. Horace seems sensible of the importance of this victory, and proclaims with a fine poetic enthusiasm, the obligations which Rome owed to the family of the hero who obtained it, and the terror which, before that time, Hannibal had spread over all Italy.

Quid debeas, O Roma, Neronibus,
Testis Metaurum flumen, et Asdrubal
Devictus, et pulcher fugatis
Ille dies Latio tenebris,
Qui primus almâ risit adorea;
Dirus per urbes Afer ut Italas,
Ceus flamma per tedas, vel Eurus
Per Siculas equitavit undas.

How much the grandeur of thy rising state,
Owes to the Neroes, Rome imperial! say,
Witness Metaurus, and the dismal fate
Of vanquish'd Asdrubal, and that glad day
Which first, auspicious, as the darkness fled,
O'er Latium's face a tide of glory shed.
Through wide Hesperia's tow'ring cities, crush'd
With hideous fall and desolation dire,
Impetuous, wild the Carthaginian rush'd;
As through the pitchy pines destructive fire
Devours its course, or howling Eurys raves,
And posting sweeps the mad Sicilian waves.

FRANCIS.

We came next to Senegallia, another sea-port town upon this coast. There is nothing remarkable in this town, except during the time of the fair, which is held there once a year, to which a great concourse of merchants resort, from Venice, and all the towns on both sides of the Adriatic; also from Sicily, and the Archipelago. England carries on a very profitable trade with all the towns in Romagna, from which our merchants purchase great quantities of raw silk, and afterwards sell it, when manufactured, to the inhabitants. They provide them also in English cotton and linen cloths, of every kind.

The distance between Senegallia and Ancona, is about fifteen miles. We travelled most of this road after it was dark, much against the inclination of the Italian servants, who assured us,

that it is often infested with robbers. Those fellows, they told us, come sometimes from the coast of Dalmatia, attack travellers on this road, carry what booty can be got, on board their boats, which are never at a great distance, and then sail to the opposite shore, or to some other part of the coast. As we travelled slowly over the sandy road, some men in sailors dresses, overtook us. Our Italians were convinced they belonged to the gang of pirates, or robbers, they had spoken of. Our company was too numerous to be attacked; but they attempted, secretly, to cut off the trunks from the chaises, without succeeding.

L E T T E R X X X .

Ancona.

ANCONA is said to have been founded by Syracusans who had fled from the tyranny of Dionysius. The town originally was built on a hill, but the houses have been gradually extended down the face of the eminence, towards the sea. The cathedral stands on the highest part; from whence there is a most advantageous view of the town, the country, and the sea. This church is supposed to be placed on the spot where a temple, dedicated to Venus, formerly stood; the same mentioned by Juvenal, when he speaks of a large turbot caught on this coast, and presented to the Emperor Domitian.

*Incidit Adriaci spacium admirabile rhombi,
Ante domum Veneris, quam Dorica sustinet Ancon.*

An Adriatic turbot, of a wonderful size, was caught before the temple of Venus, at Ancona, a city built by the Greeks.

The ascents and descents, and great inequality of the ground, will prevent this from being a

beautiful town, but it has much the appearance of becoming a rich one. Some of the nobility have the firmness and good sense to despise an ancient prejudice, and avowedly prosecute commerce. New houses are daily building, and the streets are animated with the bustle of trade. I met with several English traders on the Change, which seemed crowded with sea-faring men, and merchants, from Dalmatia, Greece, and many parts of Europe. There are great numbers of Jews established in this city. I know not whether this race of men contribute greatly to the prosperity of a country; but it is generally remarked, that those places are in a thriving condition to which they resort. They have a synagogue here, and although all religions are tolerated, theirs is the only foreign worship allowed to be publicly exercised. The commerce of Ancona has increased very rapidly of late years; and it is evident, that the Popes who first thought of making it a free port, of encouraging manufactures, and of building a mole, to render the harbour more safe, have injured Venice in a more sensible manner, than those who thundered bulls against that republic; but it is much to be questioned, whether the former, by their encouragements to commerce, have augmented their own spiritual importance in the same proportion they have the temporal riches of their subjects.

Men who have received a liberal education, and have adopted liberal sentiments previous to

their engaging in any particular profession, will carry these sentiments along with them through life: and, perhaps, there is no profession in which they can be exercised with more advantage and utility, than in that of a merchant. In this profession a man of the character above described, while he is augmenting his own private fortune, will enjoy the agreeable reflection, that he is likewise encreasing the riches and power of his country, and giving bread to thousands of his industrious countrymen. Of all professions, his is in its nature the most independent: the merchant does not, like the soldier, receive wages from his sovereign; nor like the lawyer and physician, from his fellow-subjects. His wealth often flows from foreign sources, and he is under no obligation to those from whom it is derived. The habit which he is in, of circulating millions, makes him lay less stress on a few guineas, than the proprietors of the largest estates; and we daily see, particularly in countries where this profession is not considered as degrading, the commercial part of the inhabitants giving the most exalted proofs of generosity and public spirit. But in countries where nobody, who has the smallest claim to the title of a gentleman, can engage in commerce without being thought to have demeaned himself, fewer examples of this nature will be found: and in every country, it must be acknowledged, that those who have not had the advantage of a liberal education; who have been bred from

their infancy to trade; who have been taught to consider money as the most valuable of all things, and to value themselves, and others, in proportion to the quantity they possess; who are continually revolving in their minds, to the exclusion of all other ideas, the various means of increasing their stock; to such people money becomes a more immediate and direct object of attention, than to any other class of men; it swells in their imagination, is rated beyond its real worth, and at length, by an inversion of the Christian precept, it is considered as the one thing needful, to be sought with the most unremitting ardour, that all other things may be added thereunto.

In commercial towns, where every body finds employment, and is agitated by the bustle of business, the minds of the inhabitants are apt to be so much engrossed with the affairs of this world, as almost to forget that there is another; and neither the true religion, nor false ones, have such hold of their minds, as in places where there is more poverty, and less worldly occupation. In the first, they consider the remonstrances of priests and confessors as interruptions to business; and, without daring to despise the ceremonies of religion, like the speculative Sceptic or infidel, the hurried trader huddles them over as fast as possible, that he may return to occupations more congenial with the habit of his mind. The preachers may cry

aloud and spare not; they may lift up their voices like trumpets, proclaiming the nothingness of this world, and all which it contains; it is in vain. Men who have been trained to the pursuit of money from their childhood, who have bestowed infinite pains to acquire it, and who derive all their importance from it, must naturally have a partiality for this world, where riches procure so many flattering distinctions; and a prejudice against *that* in which they procure none; but in towns where there is a little trade, and great numbers of poor people, where they have much spare time, and small comfort in this world, the clergy have an easier task, if they are tolerably assiduous, in turning the attention of the inhabitants to the other. In Roman Catholic towns of this description, we see the people continually pacing up and down the streets with wax tapers in their hands. They listen with fond attention to all the priest relates concerning that invisible country, that Land of promise, where their hopes are placed; they ruminate, with complacency, on the happy period when *they* also shall have their good things; they bear their present rags with patience, in expectation of the white raiment and crowns of gold, which, they are told, await *them*; they languish for the happiness of being promoted to that lofty situation, from whence they may look down, with scorn, on those to whom they now look up with envy, and where they shall retaliate on their wealthy neighbours,

whose riches, at present, they imagine, insult their own poverty.

This town being exposed by the nature of its commerce with Turkey, to the contagious diseases which prevail in that country, Clement XII. as soon as he determined to make it a free port, erected a lazaretto. It advances a little way into the sea, is in the form of a pentagon, and is a very noble, as well as useful edifice. He afterwards began a work, as necessary, and still more expensive; I mean the mole built in the sea, to screen the vessels in the harbour from the winds which frequently blow from the opposite shore of the Adriatic with great violence. This was carried on with redoubled spirit by Benedict XIV. after his quarrel with Venice, has been continued by the succeeding Popes, and is now almost finished. This building was founded on the ruins of the ancient Mole, raised by the Emperor Trajan. The stone of Istria was used at first, till the exportation of it was prohibited by the republic of Venice, who had no reason to wish well to this work. But a quarry of excellent stone was afterwards found near Ancona, as fit for the purpose; and a kind of sand, which, when mixed with lime, forms a composition as hard as any stone, is brought from the neighbourhood of Rome; and no other is used for this building, which is above two thousand feet in length, one hundred in breadth, and about sixty in depth, from the

surface of the sea. A stupendous work, more analogous to the power and revenues of ancient, than of modern, Rome.

Near to this stands the Triumphal Arch, as it is called, of Trajan. This is an honorary monument, erected in gratitude to that Emperor, for the improvements he made in this harbour at his own expence. Next to the *Maison Quarrée* at Nîmes, it is the most beautiful and most entire monument of Roman taste and magnificence I have yet seen. The fluted Corinthian pillars on the two sides are of the finest proportions; and the Parian marble of which they are composed, instead of having acquired a black colour, like the Ducal palace of Venice, and other buildings of marble, is preserved, by the sea vapour, as white and shining as if it were fresh polished from the rock. I viewed this charming piece of antiquity with sentiments of pleasure and admiration, which sprang from a recollection of the elegant taste of the artist who planned this work, the humane amiable virtues of the great man to whose honour it was raised, and the grandeur and policy of the people who, by such rewards, prompted their Princes to wise and beneficent undertakings.

L E T T E R XXXI.

Loretto.

THE road from Ancona to this place runs through a fine country, composed of a number of beautiful hills and intervening vallies. Loretto itself is a small town, situated on an eminence, about three miles from the sea. I expected to have found it a more magnificent, at least a more commodious, town for the entertainment of strangers. The inn-keepers do not disturb the devotion of the pilgrims by the luxuries of either bed or board. I have not seen worse accommodations since I entered Italy, than at the inn here. This seems surprising, considering the great resort of strangers. If any town in England were as much frequented, every third or fourth house would be a neat inn.

The Holy Chapel of Loretto, all the world knows, was originally a small house in Nazareth, inhabited by the Virgin Mary, in which she was saluted by the Angel, and where she bred our Saviour. After their deaths it was held in great veneration by all believers in Jesus, and at

length consecrated into a chapel, and dedicated to the Virgin; upon which occasion St. Luke made that identical image, which is still preserved here, and dignified with the name of our Lady of Loretto. This sanctified edifice was allowed to sojourn in Galilee as long as that district was inhabited by Christians; but when infidels got possession of the country, a band of angels, to save it from pollution, took it in their arms, and conveyed it from Nazareth to a castle in Dalmatia. This fact might have been called in question by incredulous people, had it been performed in a secret manner; but, that it might be manifest to the most short-sighted spectator, and evident to all who were not perfectly deaf as well as blind, a blaze of celestial light, and a concert of divine music, accompanied it during the whole journey; besides, when the angels, to rest themselves, set it down in a little wood near the road, all the trees of the forest bowed their heads to the ground, and continued in that respectful posture as long as the Sacred Chapel remained among them. But, not having been entertained with suitable respect at the castle above mentioned, the same indefatigable angels carried it over the sea, and placed it in a field belonging to a noble lady, called Lauretta, from whom the Chapel takes its name. This field happened unfortunately to be frequented at that time by highwaymen and murderers; a circumstance with which the

angels undoubtedly were not acquainted when they placed it there. After they were better informed, they removed it to the top of a hill belonging to two brothers, where they imagined it would be perfectly secure from the dangers of robbery or assassination; but the two brothers, the proprietors of the ground, being equally enamoured of their new visitor, became jealous of each other, quarrelled, fought, and fell by mutual wounds. After this fatal catastrophe, the angels in waiting finally removed the Holy Chapel to the eminence where it now stands, and has stood these four hundred years, having lost all relish for travelling.

To silence the captious objections of cavillers, and give full satisfaction to the candid inquirer, a deputation of respectable persons was sent from Loretto to the city of Nazareth, who, previous to their setting out, took the dimensions of the Holy House with the most scrupulous exactness. On their arrival at Nazareth, they found the citizens scarcely recovered from their astonishment; for it may be easily supposed, that the sudden disappearance of a house from the middle of a town, would naturally occasion a considerable degree of surprise, even in the most philosophic minds. The landlords had been alarmed in a particular manner, and had made enquiries, and offered rewards, all over Galilee, without having been able to get any satisfactory account of the fugitive. They felt their interest

much affected by this incident; for, as houses had never before been considered as *moveables*, their value fell immediately. This indeed might be partly owing to certain evil-minded persons, who, taking advantage of the public alarm, for selfish purposes, circulated a report, that several other houses were on the wing, and would most probably disappear in a few days. This affair being so much the object of attention at Nazareth, and the builders of that city declaring, they would as soon build upon quick-sand as on the vacant space which the Chapel had left at its departure, the deputies from Loretto had no difficulty in discovering the foundation of that edifice, which they carefully compared with the dimensions they had brought from Loretto, and found that they tallied exactly. Of this they made oath at their return; and in the mind of every rational person, it remains no longer a question, whether this is the real house which the Virgin Mary inhabited, or not. Many of those particulars are narrated with other circumstances in books which are sold here; but I have been informed of one circumstance, which has not hitherto been published in any book, and which, I dare swear, you will think ought to be made known for the benefit of future travellers. This morning, immediately before we left the inn, to visit the Holy Chapel, an Italian servant, whom the D— of H—— engaged at Venice, took me aside, and told me, in a very serious manner, that stran-

gers were apt secretly to break off little pieces of the stone belonging to the Santa Casa, in the hopes that such precious relics might bring them good fortune; but he earnestly entreated me not to do any such thing: for he knew a man at Venice, who had broken off a small corner of one of the stones, and flipt it into his breeches pocket unperceived; but, so far from bringing him good fortune, it had burnt its way out, like aqua fortis, before he left the Chapel, and scorched his thighs in such a miserable manner, that he was not able to sit on horseback for a month. I thanked Giovanni for his obliging hint, and assured him I should not attempt any theft of that nature.

LETTER XXXII.

Loretto.

THE Sacred Chapel stands due east and west, at the farther end of a large church of the most durable stone of Istria, which has been built around it. This may be considered as the external covering, or as a kind of great coat to the Casa Santa, which has a smaller coat of more precious materials and workmanship nearer its body. This internal covering, or case, is of the choicest marble, after a plan of San Savino's, and ornamented with basso relievos, the workmanship of the best sculptors which Italy could furnish in the reign of Leo the Tenth. The subject of those basso relievos are, the history of the Blessed Virgin, and other parts of the Bible. The whole case is about fifty feet long, thirty in breadth, and the same in height; but the real house itself is no more than thirty-two feet in length, fourteen in breadth, and at the sides, about eighteen feet in height; the centre of the roof is four or five feet higher. The walls of this little Holy Chapel are composed of pieces of a reddish substance, of an oblong

square shape, laid one upon another, in the manner of brick. At first sight, on a superficial view, these red-coloured oblong substances appear to be nothing else than common Italian bricks; and which is still more extraordinary, on a second and third view, with all possible attention, they still have the same appearance. There is not, however, as we were assured, a single particle of brick in their whole composition, being entirely of a stone, which, though it cannot now be found in Palestine, was formerly very common, particularly in the neighbourhood of Nazareth. There is a small interval between the walls of the ancient house, and the marble case. The workmen, at first, intended them to be in contact, from an opinion, founded either upon gross ignorance or infidelity, that the former stood in need of support from the latter; but the marble either started back of itself, from such impious familiarity, being conscious of its unworthiness; or else was thrust back by the coyness of the Virgin brick, it is not said which. But it has certainly kept at a proper distance ever since. While we examined the basso relievos of the marble case, we were not a little incommoded by the numbers of pilgrims who were constantly crawling around it on their knees, kissing the ground, and saying their prayers with great fervour. As they crept along, they discovered some degree of eagerness to be nearest the wall; not, I am persuaded, with a view of saving their own

labour, by contracting the circumference of their circuit; but from an idea that the evolutions they were performing, would be the more beneficial to their souls, the nearer they were to the Sacred House. This exercise is continued in proportion to the zeal and strength of the patient.

Above the door there is an inscription; by which it appears, that any person who enters with arms is, ipso facto, excommunicated.

INGREDIENTES CUM ARMIS SUNT
EXCOMMUNICATI.

There are also the severest denunciations against those who carry away the smallest particle of the stone and mortar belonging to this Chapel. The adventure of the burnt breeches, and others of a similar nature, which are industriously circulated, have contributed as much as any denunciation, to prevent such attempts. Had it not been for the impressions they make, so great was the eagerness of the multitude to be possessed of any portion of this little edifice, that the whole was in danger of being carried away; not by angels, but piecemeal in the pockets of the pilgrims.

The Holy House is divided, within, into two unequal portions, by a kind of grate-work of

silver. The division towards the west is about three-fourths of the whole; that to the east is called the Sanctuary. In the larger division, which may be considered as the main body of the house, the walls are left bare, to shew the true original fabric of Nazareth stone. These stones, which bear such a strong resemblance to bricks, are loose in many places. I took notice of this to a pilgrim, who entered with us; he smiled, saying, "Che la non habbia paura, Padron mio, questi muri sono piu solidi degli Appenini." "Be not afraid, my good Sir, these walls are more firm than the Apennines." At the lower, or western wall, there is a window, the same through which the angel Gabriel entered at the Annunciation. The architraves of this window are covered with silver. There are a great number of golden and silver lamps in this Chapel; I did not count them, but I was told there were above sixty; one of them is a present from the republic of Venice; it is of gold, and weighs thirty-seven pounds: some of the silver lamps weigh from one hundred and twenty, to one hundred and thirty pounds. At the upper end of the largest room is an altar, but so low, that from it you may see the famous image which stands over the chimney, in the small room, or Sanctuary. Golden and silver angels, of considerable size, kneel around her, some offering hearts of gold, enriched with diamonds, and one an infant of pure gold. The wall of the Sanctuary is plated with silver, and

adorned with crucifixes, precious stones, and votive gifts of various kinds. The figure of the Virgin herself by no means corresponds with the fine furniture of her house: she is a little woman, about four feet in height, with the features and complexion of a negro. Of all the sculptors that ever existed, assuredly St. Luke, by whom this figure is said to have been made, is the least of a flatterer; and nothing can be a stronger proof of the blessed Virgin's contempt for external beauty, than her being satisfied with this representation of her; especially if, as I am inclined to believe, her face and person really resembled those beautiful ideas of her, conveyed by the pencils of Raphael, Corregio, and Guido. The figure of the infant Jesus, by St. Luke, is of a piece with that of the Virgin: he holds a large golden globe in one hand, and the other is extended, in the act of blessing. Both figures have crowns on their heads, enriched with diamonds: these were presents from Ann of Austria, Queen of France. Both arms of the Virgin are inclosed within her robes, and no part but her face is to be seen; her dress is most magnificent, but in a wretched bad taste: this is not surprising, for she has no female attendant. She has particular clothes for the different feasts held in honour of her, and, which is not quite so decent, is always dressed and undressed by the priests belonging to the Chapel; her robes are ornamented with

all kinds of precious stones, down to the hem of her garment.

There is a small place behind the Sanctuary, into which we were also admitted. This is a favour seldom refused to strangers of a decent appearance. In this they shew the chimney, and some other furniture, which, they pretend, belonged to the Virgin when she lived at Nazareth; particularly a little earthen porringer, out of which the infant used to eat. The pilgrims bring rosaries, little crucifixes, and Agnus Dei's, which the obliging priest shakes for half a minute in this dish; after which, it is believed, they acquire the virtue of curing various diseases, and prove an excellent preventative of all temptations of Satan. The gown which the image had on when the chapel arrived from Nazareth, is of red camblet, and carefully kept in a glass shrine.

Above an hundred masses are daily said in this Chapel, and in the church in which it stands. The music we heard in the Chapel was remarkably fine. A certain number of the chaplains are eunuchs, who perform the double duty of singing the offices in the choir, and saying masses at the altar. The canonical law, which excludes persons in their situation from the priesthood, is eluded by a very extraordinary expedient, which I shall leave you to guess.

The jewels and riches to be seen at any one time in the Holy Chapel, are of small value in comparison of those in the treasury, which is a large room adjoining the vestry of the great church. In the presses of this room are kept those presents which royal, noble, and rich bigots of all ranks have, by oppressing their subjects, and injuring their families, sent to this place. To enumerate every particular, would fill volumes. They consist of various utensils, and other things in silver and gold; as lamps, candlesticks, goblets, crowns, and crucifixes: lambs, eagles, saints, apostles, angels, virgins, and infants: then there are cameos, pearls, gems, and precious stones of all kinds, and in great numbers. What is valued above all the other jewels is, the miraculous pearl, wherein they assert, that Nature has given a faithful delineation of the Virgin, sitting on a cloud, with the infant Jesus in her arms. I freely acknowledge, that I did see something like a woman with a child in her arms; but whether Nature intended this as a portrait of the Virgin Mary, or not, I will not take upon me to say; yet I will candidly confess (though, perhaps, some of my friends in the north, may think it is saying too much in support of the Popish opinion) that the figure in this pearl bore as great a likeness to some pictures I have seen of the Virgin, as to any female of my acquaintance.

There was not room in the presses of the treasury, to hold all the silver pieces which have been presented to the Virgin. Several other presses in the vestry, they told us, were completely full, and they made an offer to shew them; but our curiosity was already satiated.

It is said, that those pieces are occasionally melted down, by his Holiness, for the use of the State; and also, that the most precious of the jewels are picked out, and sold for the same purpose, false stones being substituted in their room. This is an affair entirely between the Virgin and the Pope: if she does not, I know no other person who has a right to complain.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

